AN

EXPOSITION

WITH

Practical Obſervations

CONTINUED

Upon the Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Chapters of the Book of

JOB:

BEING

The Sum of thirty two Lectures, delivered at *Magnus* near the Bridge, LONDON.

By JOSEPH CARYL, *Miniſter of the Goſpel.*

Pſal. 34. 19.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.

LONDON,

Printed by *M. Simmons*, and are to be ſold by *George Calvert*, *Edward Thomas*, and *Samuel Sprint*, at the *Golden Ball* in *Duck-lane*, and the *Adam* and *Eve* in *Little-Brittain*. 1669.

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

To those chiefly of this City, who have been the Movers, and continue the Promoters of this Work.

I Am your Debtour, and because my stock cannot pass out great sums at once, therefore I am constrained to discharge my credit by these smaller payments. I need not call upon you for acquittances or cancell'd Bonds: I know your ingenuity will confess more received then I have paid. I have paid you in the Book now presented, as much as I

intended for this time. But time will not suffer me to pay you what I intended and had projected for an Epistle. And I believe your selves will easier excuse a short Epistle, then a longer stay for the whole Book. Accept both with your wonted candour, and let all these Labours on your behalf be the return of your own prayers to the Father of lights, by the help of the Spirit of Grace, in Jesus Christ, for

January 12.
1646.

Your affectionate Friend

and servant in this

work of the Lord.

Joseph Caryl.

AN EXPOSITION WITH PRACTICALL OBSERVATIONS, CONTINUED Upon the Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Chapters of the BOOK of *JOB*.

JOB 8. 1, 2, 3.

Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,
How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?
Doth God pervert judgement? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?

THe answer of *Eliphaz* to *Jobs* first complaint, hath been opened in the fourth and fifth Chapters, together with *Jobs* reply, in the sixth and seventh. In which he labours to disasperse and vindicate himself from what *Eliphaz* had rashly taxed him with, *Hypocrisie*, *The name of an hypocrite, (like that of a heretick) is such, as no man ought to be patient under.*

But while *Job* endeavours to cleare himself in the opinion, or from the imputations of one of his friends, he runnes into a further arrere of prejudices with a second: Some of those arguments which he had framed to pay his debt to *Eliphaz*, and save his own integrity, being again charged upon his account, by his friend *Bildad the Shuhite*; who presents himself (a duty very commendable) as an *Advocate for God*; and he conceived there was but need he should. *Job* in his reply having (in his sense) wronged the justice of God, he takes himself obliged to stand up and clear it, to shew *Job* his supposed sinne, and provoke him to repentance, both by threatnings of further wrath, and promises of speedy mercy. Thus in general.

More distinctly, there are four parts of *Bildads* speech.

First, A confutation of *Jobs* reply to *Eliphaz*; and he gives it us shadowed by an elegant similitude in the second verse, *How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like the strong wind?* There's a censure upon all that he had spoken.

Secondly, He gives us an assertive Question, concerning the justice of God; to clear it from, and set it above, whatsoever might seem to stain it in the eyes of men. This we have at the third verse, *Doth God pervert judgement? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?* Not he.

Thirdly, In the body of the Chapter he urges divers arguments to confirm this conclusion, that, *God is just*; and these are three heads of argument, by which he confirms it.

First, From the example of *Jobs* children, and from his own present, with the possibility of his future condition, in case he repent, from the third verse unto the eighth.

The second argument is drawn from the testimony of antiquity, and that's laid down in the eighth, ninth, and tenth verses.

The third argument appears in the similitudes;

1. Of a *rush* or *flag*, in the 11, 12, and 13, verses.
2. Of a *Spiders-web*, in the 14, and 15, verses.
3. Of a *Tree flourishing* for a time, but anon plucked up, in the 16, 17, 18, and 19, verses. These are the arguments and illustrations of his grand assertion.

Doth God pervert judgement? or doth the Almighty pervert justice? No he doth not. *And thou mayest learn this lesson from thy own experience, from the example of thy children, from the testimony*

of

of antiquity, yea the withering rush, the spiders-web, the luxuriant roots and branches of a tree, may all be thy Masters and instructours to teach thee this truth, That God is just.

The fourth and last part of the Chapter, sets forth the favour of God, to those who are faithful and sincere: for having maintained the justice of God, and shewed how terrible he will be to hypocrites who deal falsly with him; he now mitigates and mollifies his discourse, by proclaiming the goodness of God to sinners repenting, yea (who are the worst of sinners) to hypocrites if they repent, pluck off their masks or disguises, and truly humble themselves before him. This is the subject of the three last verses of the Chapter, *Behold God will not cast away a perfect man*, &c. As if he had said, *Though God be just to deal with hypocrites, as he hath dealt with thee and thy children, yet he will not cast away the perfect and upright; shew thy self such, and he will receive thee.* This he quickens by subjoyning the further severity of God to those that shall persist in their hypocrisie, *ver.* 20. and in the close of the 22. *Neither will he help the evil doers, and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.*

Thus you have both the general scope, and likewise the special parts of *Bildads* discourse, which will give us some help towards a more clear discovery of particulars.

Verse 1. *Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,*

The Speaker is *Bildad*; I shall not stay upon the person, who this *Bildad* was, of what line and pedigree, was touched in opening the 11. verse of the second Chapter, and therefore I shall pass to the matter about which he speaks.

Verse 2. *How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be as a strong wind?*

He begins very chidingly,

How long wilt thou speak these things?

The words import either, first, admiration, *How long!* As if he had said, *Could any man have believed that thou wouldst have spoken such things as these, and these so long! How strangely hast thou forgot thy self, to twist such a thred, and spin out a discourse so sinfully, so frowardly, so long?*

Secondly, The words may carry a sense of indignation in the

Speaker, *How long wilt thou speak these things?* As if he had said, *I am not able to bear thee any longer, I cannot endure such language, it grates harshly upon mine ear, and is a burden to my spirit; for shame give over, hold thy peace, enjoyn thy self silence, lock up thy lips, How long wilt thou speak these things?*

Thirdly, The charge of an accusation may lie under these words, *How long wilt thou speak these things?* Thas is, *How long wilt thou speak vain and foolish words, indiscreet and false words, dangerous and blasphemous words, imputing injustice unto God? Art thou obstinate and pertinacious? Wilt thou not yet hearken to the admonitions and wholsome counsel of thy friends? How long!* Thus he taxes and censures him, *How long wilt thou speak?* We have the like sense in that Question, *Psal.* 4. 2. where *David* contests with his hardened enemies, *O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glorie into shame? How long will ye love vanitie, and seek after leesing?* How long, and how long? it is matter of admiration, to think that reasonable creatures should be so unreasonable to love vanity, and to love it long. His spirit rises and boyls so high with holy indignation, to see men so fooliſh, that his mouth must run over in censure and accusation, How long! The text of wisdomes expostulation, *Prov.* 1. 22. (*How long yo simple ones will ye love simplicitie?*) bears the same gloss, one interpretation fits both.

Interrogatio ex adjuncto tempore acu eos addit reprehensioni. Sanct.

How long wilt thou speak these things?

These things.) The demonstrative particle may have reference to the words immediately fore-going, and only to them, *How long wilt thou speak these things?* That is, the things which thou hast spoken in the sixth and seventh Chapters. The language is undervaluing and contemptuous, *How long wilt thou speak these things?* Such poor stuff. How long wilt thou trouble thy Auditors with such matter, such fruitless, frothy, crude, and undigested matter; matter so injurious, so dishonourable to God, so unsavoury, and unedifying to man.

Taking *Job* (under *Bildads* apprehension) as having failed and erred in his discourse. Observe, first,

Perseverance in evil is worse then the doing of evil, *How long wilt thou speak these things?* If thou having spoken once amiss had'st recall'd thy self, and stopped there, it had been more excusable, *To outlash sometimes in a word, may be a wise mans case:* but to

make

make such a continued studied oration as this, and be out in all, and all to be an invective against heaven, who is able to bear it? *To speak or do ill, though but once, is too often by once; To Act evil often, is to double every act.* The shortest time is too long to serve any lust in. When the Apostle *Peter* (1 Pet. 4. 3.) saith, *The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles*; his meaning is, *the time past is too much*: our lusts have got too much of our lives, as the world hath too much of our loves. One minute is more then we owe to the service of sinne. The sufficiency here spoken of is an excess; the time past of our lives is too much to work the will of the *Gentiles*. We may not make an equal division of our lives between our lusts and Christ, so much to Christ, so much to lust. Nothing is more unequal then this equality. We can never serve Christ too long, nor sinne too short a time. We cannot bestow too much of our breath in holy speeches and conferences; nor can we bestow too little in those which are vain, and sinful. We may justly take off those who are most concise and laconical in useless discourses, with, *How long will you speak these things? Frothie words are the waste of time as well as of breath.*

Secondly, Note, *Bildad* rebukes *Job* for his lavish language.

It is our dutie to be watchful over our words. How long wilt thou speak thus? We must observe our own words, and know what we speak. We should stop our own mouths, and put our selves to silence, when the tongue grows unruly. *It were very happy that some had power as well as authority over their own mouths, and knew how to put that bridle* (spoken of in the Psalm) *upon their own lips.* It is better for a man to stop his own mouth by prudence, then that another should stop it by reproof.

Thirdly, Taking *Bildads* supposition still, that *Job* was in the wrong. Note,

It is our dutie to give check to fruitless and frothie speeches, much more to blasphemous and wicked speeches. *Bildad* thought it high time to silence *Job*, seeing *Job* would not silence himself. The Apostle represents to *Titus* the tongue-folly of the *Cretians*, *There are many unruly and vain talkers among you, especially they of the circumcision*; and what must be done with these, who cared so little what they said? He is counsell'd how to deal with them in the next words, *Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses*, &c. It is a sinne in the hearer to let another speak sinfully

without

without a signification of his distaste. The word which the Apostle useth to *Titus*, is a metaphor taken from the *muzling of barking, bauling dogs*, when they open unseasonably and are unquiet, *Rational conviction is a Gospel-muzle, and an effectual stop-mouth for unruly talkers.* And it is observable, that the Apostle useth this similitude of muzling a dog, when he speaks of those of the circumcision, concerning whom he had given caution in a very sutable character (*Phil.*3.2.) *Beware of doggs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision*; that is, of those who stood for circumcision. Writing to the *Philippians*, he calls them doggs; and his advice to *Titus* is, they must be muzl'd. The noxious issues of the tongue must either be cured or stopped, *Evil words corrupt* (which is worse then the corrupting of good air) *good manners.* An infection taken in at the ear, hath often poyson'd the heart.

Fourthly, Taking *Bildad* as mistaken (and so he was) in this reproof and censure upon *Job.* Observe

Reproofs are often grounded upon mistakes. It is easie to reprove, what we do not apprehend. *Bildad* perceived not the reach and drift of *Job*, and yet he falls heavily upon him with reproofs. A due understanding of his scope, would have given a fair comment upon his words. But *Bildad* clothes the speech of *Job*, in a sense which he abhorred; and having put it in that ugly dress, he reproves and cènsures it accordingly. Many disfigure the opinions and doctrines of others with conceits of their own, and presuming they hold or mean thus and thus, they dispute not against the real opinion of the opposite party, but their own disguise. As the persons of the *Primitive Christians* were often put into Lions, or Bears-skins, by their barbarous and heathenish persecutors, and then baited with doggs; so are the opinions of many *later Christians* debated.

And how long shall the words of thy mouth be as a strong wind?

רוח כביר *Spiritus sumitur pro habitudo per Metonymiam pro verbo, i. e. pro vere articulato, & per loquelæ instrumenta in verba formato.* Bald.

The Hebrew word for word runs thus, *And the words of thy mouth a strong wind:* We resume in this later clause, *How long*, and adde, *be like*, to supply the sense. There is no tearm of comparison expressed in the Original, yet the strength of one is implyed, and therefore to fill up the meaning, we render, *And how long shall the words of thy mouth be as a strong winde?* M. *Broughton* translates it without a note of similitude, *How long wilt thou talk in this sort, that the words of thy mouth be a vehement winde?*

Words

Words are Air or Breath formed and articulated, by the inſtruments of ſpeech. Hence breath and words are put for the ſame in divers Scriptures (Pſal.33.6.) *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hoſt of them by the breath of his mouth. Breath* in the later clauſe, is no more then *word* in the firſt, for it was a powerful word, which cauſed all the creatures to ſtand out in their ſeveral forms. So Iſa.11.4. *He ſhall ſmite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips (or with the wind of his lips) ſhall he ſlay the wicked*; It is not blowing upon wicked men that will ſlay them, but it is ſpeaking to them; there is a power in the word of a Prophet, when ſpoken in the Name of Chriſt, which deſtroyes thoſe who will not obey it, *Hoſ.6.5. I have hewed them by my Prophets, I have ſlain them by the words of my mouth.*

Secondly, * *Bildad* is conceived to allude to a certain ſort or ſect of men. For from *Cabir* here tranſlated *ſtrong*, the name of certain Poets or old Prophets is derived, whom the Greeks and Latines called *Cabirs* or *Cabirims*. Theſe men had an affected outward gravity, yet were full of words, and much given to *Battologie*, repeating the ſame things over and over. *Bildad* ranks *Job* (ſay ſome) with thoſe Prophets, *How long ſhall the words of thy mouth be like thoſe roming Cabirs*, who by a needleſs multiplying of words, grated the ears, and burdened the ſpirits of all the hearers? Why doeſt thou ſpeak, as if thou couldſt carry the matter with empty words, and bare repetitions.

Thirdly, The word *ſtrong winde*, may note the ſtoutneſs of *Jobs* ſpirit, or the magnanimity he expreſt in his words. *Jobs* language was not cold and chill, as if his breath were frozen, but he ſpake with hight and heat, *The ſpirit and courage of a man, breaths out at his lips*; *How long ſhall the words of thy mouth be a ſtrong winde?* When wilt thou yeeld to God, and lie humbly at his feet? What a heart haſt thou? Thou ſpeakeſt as big, as if thou hadſt never been touched, as if God never laid one ſtroke upon thee; thou haſt a weak body, but a ſtiff ſpirit: Thou ſpeakeſt as if thou wouldſt bear all down before thee, and by thy boldneſs, ſtorm and bluſter thoſe out of countenance, who are here to give thee counſel.

Fourthly, Take in the ſimilitude, *How long ſhall the words of thy mouth be as a ſtrong wind?* That is, how long wilt thou ſpeak ſo much, and ſpeak ſo fiercely. For the word *Cabir* is more then *Gadol*, which ſignifies barely *great*. Grammarians note, that it ſignifies

Græci & latini Prophetas quoſdam ex Hebræo Cabiros cognominarunt ob inſignem eorum ad extra gravitatem & loquacitatem idem dicti Coribantes. Bold. Quos Authores latini Divos potes, ſeu potentes vocant. Græcis κάβειροι dicuntur ab hac voce, quæ potem ſive potentem denotat. Druſ.

Ad magnanimitatem referri poteſt, quod corpore attenuato exhauſtiſque viribus fortiter tamen perſiſteret in loquendo & reſpondendo. Cajet.

Jobi oratio non fuit frigida & languida ſed vehemens & concitata. Pined.

nifies both *continued quantity* and *discreet quantity*, multitude and magnitude. How many words wilt thou speak? and how great words wilt thou speak? Shall thy words be as a great, various, enfolded winde? (so the Vulgar,) Wilt thou blow all the points of the compass at once, and like a whirle-wind, invade and circle us on every side?

Spiritus multiplex sermones oris tui. Vulg. πνευμα πολυρρημων. *Spiritus multiloquus.* Sept.

Such words are like a strong winde.

First, Because of their blustering noise. There are stormy and tempestuous words. *The tempest of the tongue is one of the greatest tempests in the world.* Passionate language troubles both the air and ear, makes all unquiet, like an enraged angry winde.

Secondly, In such words as in stormy winds there is great strength to bear all down before them, or to sway all to that point they blow for. As all the trees in a forrest look that way which the winde sits: so all the spirits in any Assembly, are apt to turn that way which words bearing a fair shew of reason direct. How often are the judgments and opinions of men, carried by words either to good or evil, to truth or errour. And unless a man have good abilities of judgement and reason, to manage what he knows or holds, and to make himself master of it: It is a hard thing upon a large wind of anothers discourse, not to have his opinion turned. Hence the Apostle (*Tit.*1.11.) speaking of *vain-talkers*, saith, Their words *subvert whole houses*; as a strong wind, so strong words blow houses down, *They subvert whole houses*; as that subverts the frame and materials of the house, so this the people or inhabitants of the house; when Christ breathed graciously towards *Zacheus*, he said (*Luk.*19.9.) *This day is salvation come to this house*; when false teachers breath erroniously, *subversion comes to many houses*. The Apostle (*Ephes.*4.14.) using this similitude about the doctrines of men, adviseth us to look to our ground, and that we be well rooted; *That we be no more children, tossed too and fro, and carried with every winde of doctrine*; as if he had said, The winde that blowes from the lips of seducers (unless you be well established) will carry you to and fro like children, or wave your tops up and down as trees, yea endanger the pulling you up by the roots.

Thirdly, Strong words are as strong winds in a good sense, for as many strong winds purge and cleanse the air, making it more pure and healthy, so those strong wholesome winds from the mouths of men, purge the minde of errour and cleanse the soul of sin:

sin: This is the special means which Christ hath set up to cleanse his people from infectious and noisome opinions. These he disperses and dispels by the breath of his Ministers, in the faithful and authoritative dispensation of the Gospel.

Fourthly, There are ill qualities in strong windes; some are infectious winds, they corrupt the ayr, conveying ill vapours to the places on which they breathe: So there is a strong unwholsome wind of words, which carries unto sin or errour. How often are the spirits and manners of men infected and poison'd by such a breath?

Fifthly, They may be compared unto strong winds, in regard of the lightness of them, the wind hath little solidity in it, and that's it which *Bildad* especially reproveth in *Job*; here are a great many words, much of the tongue, but here's little matter, *Words without weight are but wind* when you gather them up, weigh and consider them fully, you can make nothing of them, there's no tack in them. Wind will not feed, no more will such words; but wholsome and faithful words are meat and drink, strength and nourishment to the soul: Sound discourse yields a well tempered understanding, many refreshing morsels.

Lastly, they are like strong winds for the swiftness of them; words pass speedily and fill all quickly; *Their line is gone out through all the Earth: and their words to the end of the world*, Psal. 19.4. Another Psalm speaks as much of wicked men, *their tongue walked thorow the earth*, Ps. 73.9. as the wind runs from one part of the world to another: So do words, when they are sent upon an errand, either to do good, or to do hurt; therefore God chose the Ministry of the Word, as an instrument to save his people. And it is the fittest instrument, running swiftly into the ears, and so conducting truth into the hearts of thousands at once. Upon the day of Pentecost (*Act.* 2.2, 3.) When the Disciples met together, the text saith, *Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting*; first comes a rushing wind; what followeth? *There appeared unto them cloven tongues with fire.* These represented the manner how the Gospel should be conveyed through the world: The holy Ghost is sent in tongues, to shew that by tongues tipt and inspired, acted and moved by the holy Ghost, the world should be subdued to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. The tongue is the chief Organ of speech. And observe, with the tongues there comes a

wind, a rushing wind, implying that words spoken by those tongues should be as a mighty rushing wind, and like that wind, which filled all the house where they sate, should fill the world, even all Nations with the sound of the Gospel; that, like a strong wind they should boar down the errours, sins and lusts of men before them, & like a wholsome wind, purge and winnow out all the filthiness and uncleanness, the chaff and dust of mens spirits. By cloven tongues and a rushing wind, wonders have been wrought in the world. *As those unruly talkers* (Tit. 1. 11.) *subverted, so those who talk by rule, have converted whole houses*; the wind of words blows both good and evil to the world; and we may as much encourage holy tongues. *Let your words be long and long, a strong wind*: as check a vain talker in the language of Bildad, *How long shall thy words be strong wind?*

From this general reproof, *Bildad* descends to a special charge against *Job*.

Vers. 3. *Doth God pervert judgement? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?*

ἀδικήσει κρίσιν, *Injuste aget judicans.* Sept. *Thesis est dicendorum.*

As if he had said, *Job, thou hast spoken words, which like a strong wind pervert all things, and turn them up-side down.* But, *Doth God pervert? Doth he turn things up-side down. This blasphemy is the interpretation of many of thy complaints. Thou seemest to lay this aspersion upon God. But* (*with indignation I speak it*) *doth God pervert judgament?*

The Question is resolvable into a vehement negation, *God doth not pervert judgement, neither doth the Almighty pervert justice.* He gives it with a question for greater emphasis, *Doth God pervert judgement?* Dost thou think he will? Far be it from thee to think so; injustice lies far from the heart of God, justice lies at his heart, *He loveth judgement*, Psal. 37. 28.

To clear the Text, I shall briefly touch upon the single terms, 1. *God.* 2. *Almighty.* 3. *Judgement.* 4. *Justice*: And then shew what it is to pervert judgement and justice; from all it will appear, how extreamly opposite it is to the very nature of God to pervert either.

אל *Fortis potens.*

Doth God] The word is, *El*, signifying the *strong God*, the *mighty God*, the *powerful God*. In the second clause, *Doth the Almighty pervert justice?* We have the word, *Shaddai*, which name of God was largely opened at the seventeenth verse of the fifth Chapter.

Chapter. I shall not stay upon it here, but only as it respects the point in hand, and so there are three interpretations of that title observable.

1. It notes God all-sufficient to do what he pleaseth, or to effect what he designeth: if he gives direction for any judgement to be executed, he is *Shaddai*, it shall be done. As he is *El*, a powerful Judge to give sentence, so he is *Shaddai*, an Almighty God to execute the sentence: there is no resisting his power, no getting out of his hands, his name is *Shaddai*.

Secondly, The word signifies *one who hath all abundance, plenty and fullness in himself*; as also, whose power, goodness and bounty, flow out to the supply of others, himself having no need to receive from any other. He is a *fountain of all for all*: hence *Shaddai* cannot but do justice; he that hath abundance in himself needs not take bribes to pervert justice, *Needy Judges are often covetous Judges; they who have not a fulness of their own, are under a great temptation to wrong others, to supply their wants.* But he that gives to all, needs not receive from any. This consideration sets God infinitely above one of the strongest temptations to injustice.

Thirdly, The word *Shaddai*, is rendred, *The maker of all things*. Will the Almighty, the maker of all things, who hath set the world in such an exquisite forme and order, who hath given so much beauty to the creature; will he put things out of order, or do such a deformed act as this, *pervert justice*? he that is the maker of all things, and hath made them in number, weight and measure, will he turn the world up-side down, or make confusion in the world? it is not possible he should.

So then, the name *Shaddai*, in these three senses, is aptly applyed to God, in opposition to the perverting of justice. As *Abraham* debates the matter with him (*Gen.* 18. 25.) *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* It is impossible for God who judgeth all men, to do an act of injustice unto any man. He that judgeth all can do injustice to none. God takes no advantage to be unjust, because none can call him to account for injustice. They should be furthest from doing wrong, who need not fear any appeal from them, or complaint against them, if they do wrong. The Judge of the whole earth hath none to judge him. He will do right to all, who cannot be judged by any.

Further, Consider those two words *judgement and justice*.

Shaddai *notat robustum & sufficientem ad omnia perpetranda & executioni mandanda, quæ facienda judicaverit: aliqui vertunt invictum. Alij vertunt uberrimum, abundantem copiosum, cujus virtus, et munificentia, per omnia permeat et cujus uberibus & bonitate omnia alantur & nutriantur, qui nullius indiget, qui bonorum nostrorum nulla cupidate tangitur.* Pined ὁ τὰ πάντα ποιήσας. Sept. *Quod sic explicant, qui cunctarum rerum naturas summo ordine & equitate constituit, is in te affligendo, quod justum est, non subvertet.*

judgement and justice are often put in Scripture for the same, and when put together, the latter is an epithite to the former, *Psalm* 119. 121. *I have done judgement and justice*: that is, I have done judgement *justly*, exactly to a haire. Sometimes they have a distinct signification.

Facere legem & preceptum est facere judicium. Deus ideo leges suas judicia vocat, quod æquissima sunt, quæ præscribit.

First, Judgement signifies, that right which every man ought to do at all times (*Psal.* 106. 3. *Isa.* 5. 7.)

Secondly, The Law or rule it self according to which every man is to write, *Levit.* 26. 26. *Psal.* 19. 10. God calls all his Laws *judgements*, because they are all, most just and equal. Judgement hath a threefold opposition, by which we may understand the nature of it.

First, Judgement is opposed to anger, rigour and severity, *Jer.* 10. 24. *Correct me O Lord, but with judgement, not in thine anger?* that is, Correct me mercifully, moderately, and in measure: suffer not thy whole displeasure to arise; do not exact the utmost farthing. In which sense the judgements of God upon wicked men in hell, shall be without judgement: And thus to do a thing without judgment, is all one, as to do it without mercy.

Ezek. 44 14.

2. Judgement is opposed to folly, or to foolishness: Judgement is wisdome, when we say, such an one is a *man of judgement*, we mean, he is a wise man. Thus judgement is an ability to judge.

3. Judgment is opposed to injustice and wrong, which is the vulgar and common meaning.

We may take it in any of these senses here. As judgement is opposed to anger, so it is moderation in justice, *Will the Lord pervert judgement?* That is, will not he be as moderate in executing judgment, as equity can admit? *Hos.* 11. 9. *I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger. I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God and not man, the Holy One in the midst of thee, and I will not enter into the City.* As an enemy having taken a City, to shew them some favour, saith, I will not enter your City with my Army to spoyl and plunder you: so God speaks here, *Though men be as wicked as they can, yet God will not be as angry as he can.*

Again, Will he pervert judgement, as it imports wisdome? No, he walks exactly by the rule of wisdome, of the highest and purest wisdome. There are no mists or clouds of ignorance before the eye of his understanding. And as he hath no darkness, so no false lights.

Lastly,

Lastly, Take it as opposed to injustice; *Will the Lord pervert judgement?* Will he wrong any man? Carries he a matter sinisterly or partially? He will not do it.

Again, As judgement and justice are taken precisely or distinctly.

First, Judgement signifies due order in trying and finding out the state of a cause: And justice the giving of sentence upon that tryal.

Secondly, Judgement is a clear knowlege of what ought to be done: And justice is the doing of that which we know, Justice is an evenness and uprightness of conscience, in passing every thing according to received light.

Thirdly, Some distinguish them thus: Judgment is in condemning those that are guilty, and justice is in absolving and acquitting those that are innocent, or rewarding those who have done well.

Fourthly, Thus: Judgment respects capital causes, which are for life; and justice respects civil causes, which are for estate or liberty.

Take them in any of these senses, or under whatsoever other distinction they are considerable The Lord God *El-Shaddai*, is no perverter of either. He never disturbs or cloggs the order of tryal; He is no hinderer of the sentence from due execution. He exactly understands every cause, and he awards what is due to every person. He wrongs no man in life or limb, in estate or liberty.

Thus we see what judgement and justice are: I shall now open what it is to pervert judgment and justice. The same word is used in both. *

Doth God pervert?] Some translate it, supplant, justice. And so it imports secret cunning wayes of injustice; for to supplant, properly is to come behind a man, and to strike up his heels, and cast him down, or to lay somewhat in his way, upon which he may trip or stumble, and then fall. God doth not supplant justice, he layes no plots, he sets no snares to entangle or overthrow a man in his cause.

More largely, the word signifieth, *To make crooked*, and so it very well answers the point in hand. Judgement and justice are both carryed by a strait line: they are the rectitude of our actions. To pervert judgement, is to make crooked lines; So we have the word (*Eccles.* 1. 16.) *That which is crooked cannot be made strait.*

He

משפט *Judicium jus, & mos seu modus in judicando.*

Judicium est in vero absq; errore cognoscendo, justitia in tribuendo cuiq; quod suum est. Judicium pœnam respicit, justitia compensationem bene actorum. Drus.

* *Istæ repetitiones divina eloquia multum commendant, sive eadem verba alia sententia, sive aliis verbis eadem sententia repetatur: illa enim ejusdem rei resumptio, moram quandã in meditando et ponderando requirit, quod in Psalmis frequent* Augustin. *Pervertit subvertit, detorquet à recto & æquo, supplantat.* Vulg. *Est autem in verbo supplanto) perbella metaphora, proprie est objecto, vel supposito pede aliquem ad casum impeltere.*

He means it of civil, not natural things, whoſe crookedneſs is often cured by art; but who can cure all civil evills; man is not able by all his diligence to turn the courſe of things which God hath determined, though to him there appear much crookedneſs, and many diſtortions. *Solomon* himſelf makes this interpretation (Chap. 7. 13.) where he ſhews, that it is beſt to ſubmit God, becauſe his will is irreſiſtible, and the effects of it unavoidable; *Conſider the work of God, for who can make that ſtraight which he hath made crooked?* So then, to pervert judgement is to make judgement crooked; or to make judgement (to which all things and perſons ſhould bow) to bow it ſelf down, as the word is alſo uſed, *Eccleſ.* 12. 3. In the deſcription of old age, *The ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelves*; the leggs and knees in old age bow and double under us. *To pervert juſtice is to creeple juſtice, to make it lame and halt.* This word is tranſlated *to overthrow* (*Joh.* 19.6.) *Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compaſſed me in with his net.* *Job* ſpeaks in a great paſſion, as if God had come upon him violently in judgement, and caſt him: We ſay a man is overthrown or caſt in his ſuit. God overthrows men and Nations; but he never overthrows juſtice. A man who overthrows his adverſary, may ſettle juſtice. *Job* looked upon himſelf, as one againſt whom God had entred his action, and overthrown him in the ſuit. Lamenting *Jeremy* cryes out (*Lam.* 3.59.) *O Lord, thou haſt ſeen my wrong* (it is this word) thou haſt ſeen how I am vexed, and wreſted by the hard dealings of men, *judge thou my caſue*; thou wilt judge me aright, and ſet me ſtraight again.

Judgement is perverted two wayes,

1. By ſubtilty.
2. By power.

Firſt, Some pervert judgement by ſubtilty; they are wiſe to do evil. The Lord hath infinite wiſdome, and ſo is able to go beyond and over-reach all creatures; he is wiſe enough to be-fool all the world: but he is not wiſe to do evil; his wiſdom is not a trap or a ſnare to others, but an unerring guide and light to himſelf.

2. Some pervert judgement by violence and force: if they cannot untie the knot by craft, they will cut it aſunder by power; and if they have not Law for it, they have will for it, and an arm for it, and it ſhall be done. The Lord can do what he will, but he hath no will to doe what is evil. He can put forth as much

ſtrength

strength as he desires, but he hath no desire to pervert justice, or to act his power to over-awe and master it.

Further, To pervert judgement and iustice, hath these two things in it,

1. *To darken and obscure the rule of judgement.*
2. *To torture or mis-interpret the rule of judgement.*

1. Judgement is perverted by darkning and obscuring the Law or rule of justice. God doth not doe so: He never casts a mist before his word, or a vail over it that he may act against it.

2. Neither doth he mis-interpret his Law. A good Law ill expounded is made the warrant of an evil judgement. A gloss corrupting the text of the Law corrupts justice. *Where tongue and conscience are set to sale, the wit must find out somewhat to help the market.*

The words opened invite these Observations. First, That *God is most exact in judgement, God is a just God.* It is a high truth, and we should adore it, that whatsoever God doth, he is just in doing it. When reason cannot reach, or make it out, yet faith must: and we must honour God in what we cannot understand: The Lord is righteous in all his wayes, though his wayes are past finding out. For,

1. He hears every cause before he judges. He doth not judge one side, before he knows the other, or judge any man before he hath heard him fully out: We see both (*Gen.* 11. and *Gen.* 18.) in those two great acts of justice, when God confounded the builders of *Babel*, and when he destroyed *Sodome*, *I will go down and see whether it be altogether according to the report that is come up unto me.* God needs no intelligence to be brought him unto Heaven: neither doth he that fills all places go to any place to enform himself: but he speaks thus, to note how exact he is in point of justice; to shew, what he deales with the children of men, as a man: who, hearing a report of such a thing done, saith, I will not judge of it by what I hear, but I will go see whether it be so or no. Without evidence of the fact, the sentence cannot be just, though it may be right.

2. He examineth and takes confession, which is another point of justice. So he proceeded with our first parents (*Gen.* 3.) proposing interrogatories unto them, and then the judgement is pronounced according unto what was confest; he judgeth them out of their own mouths, ver. 17. *Because thou hast done this, and hearkened*

hearkened unto the voyce of thy wife, therefore, &c.

3. God proceeds by the evidence of the Law, as well as by the evidence of the fact; and this alſo ſets forth the exactneſs of his judgement: Theſe two things make judgement perfect; you muſt not only have the evidence of the fact, that ſuch a thing is done, but you muſt have the evidence of the Law condemning ſuch a deed. Though God himſelf be an everlaſting Law, and he may judge all from his own breaſt; yet he hath given out a Law, which gives the knowledge of ſin. It is ſaid, *Rom.* 2. *They that have ſinned without the Law, ſhall periſh without the Law*, as if ſome ſhould be judged without Law: but he means without a Law formally publiſhed, not materially enacted. For he ſpeaks of the *Gentiles*, who were not within the hearing of Mount *Sinai*, and had not ſeen that formality of a *Law written in tables of ſtone*; yet they had a *Law written in their hearts*; they that have not heard the Law publiſhed or ſeen it written in a Book, ſhall be judged by the Law *written in their hearts, their conſcience bearing them witneſs, and their thoughts accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another.*

4. God is impartial in giving judgement. He doth not ſtrike one and ſpare another, who is under the ſame condemnation; nothing can ſway or bias him, nothing can preponderate the balance of juſtice in his hand; you cannot put in any conſideration to ſway his beam, beſide the right.

There are three things which uſually cauſe men to pervert juſtice the Lord is free from them all.

1. *Fear of greatneſs.* Some would doe juſtice, but they dare not, the buſineſs concerns a great man, and to do juſtice upon ſuch, is, *To take a Bear by the tooth* (as we ſay) *or to play with the paw of a Lyon.* Now the Lord is not turned away for fear, nor defers he juſtice for any mans big looks, *The day of the Lord* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 2.) *ſhall be againſt the high Oak.* He is *El-Shaddai*, the All-mighty, the all-powerful God, and therefore cares not for the might or power of man.

2. *Hope of reward*, that's another thing which cauſeth many to pervert judgment. With ſome their hope is ſtronger then their fear: They care not for the greatneſs of men, but they hope for gain. A bribe taken or promiſed clogs and obſtructs the courſe of juſtice (Hoſ. 4. 14.) *Her Rulers with ſhame do love, Give ye*; the Hebrew is, *Her ſhields*, Magiſtrates ſhould be as ſhields to the people to protect them, but what did they? *They love, Give ye*, that word

word pleased them. They were more pleased with receiving rewards, then with doing right. The Lord is above all gifts, he is *Shaddai*, he hath all in himself, and needs not that any should give unto him; and he tels them expresly (*Ezek.*7.19.) *That their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of his wrath*; offer thousands of silver and gold, he will not stay judgement a minute for it, *Prov.*11.4. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath*; In the day of mans wrath they sometimes will, but never in the day of Gods.

Thirdly, *Affection and neerness of relation pervert judgement.* Many have clean hands, free from bribes, and stout hearts free from fears, yet they are overcome with affection and relations; these put out the eye of justice. The Lord is above all relations. As he commands us in our cleaving unto Christ, not to know father or mother, *Yea to hate Father and mother, wife,* &c. (and those are neerest to us) that we may keep close unto Christ: So himself doth not know the neerest relation, to pervert judgement or do wrong in favour of it. Hence he saith of *Coniah* (*Jer.*22.24.) *Though Coniah be as the signet upon my right hand, yet will I pluck him thence*; Let him plead neerness (as men do, such a man is of your bloud or alliance, pray spare him) God will not spare the signet on his right hand, that is, he will not stop justice upon any pretence of neerness or usefulness.

Etiamsi fuisset Ieconia mihi charissimus, quem semper in oculis ferrem. Jun.

5. God is exact (take them distinctly) both in judgement and in justice. He is as curious in searching out the cause, as in sentencing the person. As ready to acquit the innocent, as to condemn the guilty: as careful to relieve the oppressed, as to chasten the oppressour: as * zealous in rewarding those who deserve well, as in punishing those who do evil. Not to reward is as great injustice, as not to punish. What God hath promised shall be performed, and what he threatens shall be inflicted. He will neither discourage goodness by neglecting it, nor encourage sin by winking at it. He hath bread in one hand, and a sword in the other.

* *Pervertit jus, qui non punit improbos; pervertit justitiam, qui non remunerat justorum bona opera.* Drus.

Thus we see, the Lord is most exact in justice (*Psal.*48.10.) *The right hand of the Lord is full of righteousness.* His power aud might are his right hand, and that right hand hath nothing but righteousness in it. Few men come to that of *Laban*, *It is in the power of mine hand to do thee hurt*, but I will not: most do as much hurt as is in their power. God hath all power in his hand, but he wrongs no man. As none have now any cause to say, that they have recei-

ved wrong from the hand of God: ſo at laſt all ſhall confeſs they have not.

Further, *Bildad* ſpeaking upon ſuppoſition, that God was wronged in juſtice, teacheth us, That

It is a duty to vindicate the juſtice of God, whenſoever we hear it wronged. When we hear any wounding God in his faithfulneſs, truth, or juſtice, we ſhould preſently ſtand up to plead for him; What, will God be unfaithful? Will God pervert judgement? Will God be untrue? *&c.* Thus we ſhould plead for God. When *Jeremy* could not make out the juſtice of God, he is an advocate for his juſtice, *Lord, thou art righteous, yet let me plead with thee.* He would not have the matter once queſtioned, though the manner was enquired.

Laſtly, Obſerve, That

The judgements of God may be ſecrets to us, but they are never injuries to us. Juſtice is in all the dealings of God, but his juſtice is not alwayes viſible. His judgements are founded upon reaſon, when upon his will, for his will is the higheſt reaſon. God cannot be unjuſt, and he ever puniſhes thoſe who are. He is ſo far from ſubverting judgement, that he ſubverteth Kings and Magiſtrates, yea Nations and Kingdomes for ſubverting judgement; *To ſubvert a man in his cauſe, the Lord approveth not,* Lam 3.36. The Hebrew is *The Lord ſeeth not*: That is, he doth not ſee it to approve it; but he doth ſee it to puniſh it. He is an avenger of thoſe who will not avenge the oppreſſed. And as he looks for judgement in all places, ſo eſpecially among his own people, upon whom he beſtowes moſt mercy: (*Iſa.*5.2.) when the Lord had done ſo much for his vineyard, *He looked for Judgment, and behold oppreſſion; for righteouſneſs, but behold a cry.* God makes privy ſearch thorow a Nation to find this Jewel: Judgement between man and man in commerce, which is, *commutative juſtice*; judgement from Magiſtrates to the people, which is, *diſtributive juſtice*: for theſe God is ſearching at this day; one of the greateſt ſins among us, is, the perverting of judgement: And until Judgement return to man, how can we expect mercy ſhould return from God? (Jer.5.1.) *Run to and fro thorow the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if you can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgement, that loves the truth, & I will pardon it.* A Land is ſeldome fill'd with the judgements of God, till it is emptied of judgement among men. What a ſad thing is it that there ſhould be ſo many cries againſt injuſtice

juſtice on earth, in a time when there is ſo much crying out for mercy from heaven! That in ſuch a time when the judgements of God are upon our ſelves, we ſhould not learn righteouſneſs to act it among our ſelves! I am perſwaded the *Sword of warre* had been ruſting in it's ſheath to this day, if the *Sword of juſtice* had been uſed as it ought, both to puniſh offenders, and protect the innocent. And when the ſword of juſtice ſhall be both wayes imployed, I doubt not but the ſword of war ſhall be ſheathed again, and imployed no more, but be *beaten into plow-ſhares, and our ſpears into pruning hooks. Keep ye judgement* (ſaith the Lord by his Prophet, *Iſa.* 56. 1.) *for my ſalvation is neer to come, and my righteouſneſs to be revealed.* God hath done terrible things in righteouſneſs among us, and we hope he will do comfortable things in righteouſneſs among us: ſeeing the righteous deſtructions of God have been upon us, and his righteous ſalvations (we hope) are neer us, let not our righteouſneſs be far off.

JOB Cap. 8. Verſ. 4, 5, 6, 7.

If thy children have ſinned againſt him, and he have caſt them away for their tranſgreſſion.
If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God betimes, and make thy ſupplication to the Almighty.
If thou wert pure and upright, ſurely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.
Though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhould greatly encreaſe.

THeſe four verſes contain the firſt confirmation of the former general poſition, *That God is juſt*: which is reſolved out of thoſe Queſtions, *Doth God pervert judgement? or doth the Almighty pervert juſtice?* He doth not. Then, *God is juſt*, there's the Poſition. And as that Poſition conſiſteth of two parts, ſo alſo doth this proof or confirmation of it.

1. That God doth not pervert judgement (taking judgement under that ſtrict notion for puniſhing of offenders) he proveth by

the example of *Jobs* children, whom God punished because of their transgression, as he conceived.

2. That God doth not pervert justice (taking justice under that strict and distinct notion of rewarding and relieving the innocent) he proveth by the readiness of God to do *Job* good in case he should humble himself and repent, in the fifth, sixth, and seventh verses.

His argument for the former may be thus conceived.

He doth not pervert judgement who punisheth those who have sinned against him.

But God hath punished thy children for their sin:

Therefore he doth not pervert judgement.

His Argument for the latter may be thus formed.

He doth not pervert justice who is ready to pity as soon as an offender humbly seeks, sues, and submits unto him.

But God is ready to help thee assoon as ever thou humbly seekest unto him:

Therefore God doth not pervert justice.

Thus you have the general sense of these four verses, as arguments brought for proof of the former point, that God doth not pervert judgement or justice. I shall now open them distinctly.

If thy children have sinned against him.

There may be a two-fold sense given of these words.

First, Thus: *Although thy children have sinned against him, and he hath cast them away for their iniquity; yet, if thou wilt seek unto him, he will do thee good.* Which translation makes the sense more clear then ours, *If thy children have sinned against him*, &c. The one is a supposition of what might be; the other a concession of what was.

Secondly, By way of proportion, thus: *As thy Children have sinned against him, so he hath cast them away for their transgression.* And so *Bildad* argueth with *Job* upon the same principle that *Eliphaz* had done before, *scil.* that his sonnes and himself had exceedingly provoked God, and that therefore God had sent that judgement, and laid that heavy stroke upon them, *If thy children*, or, *although thy children have sinned.*

חשאו לו *Against him.*] That word is to be opened a little. The Hebrew is, *Have sinned to him.* Which is indifferently translated, either

either *before him or againſt him*; we take the latter.

Every ſin is committed againſt God; that's the firſt. Sinne is moſt oppoſite to God. It is againſt God in his nature: againſt God in his will: againſt God in his very being. Sin would thruſt God out of the world, if it were poſſible; and therefore it is rightly tranſlated, *They have ſinned againſt him.* No marvel if God do ſo much againſt ſinners, when ſin doth ſo much againſt him; but is it not a miracle, that God ſhould do any thing, eſpecially ſuch great things for ſinners, when ſinne doth ſo much againſt him? *David* (Pſal. 51.4.) ſaw his ſin was ſo much againſt God, that he overlooks all others againſt whom it was, *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight*, which ſome miſ-interpret, as if, becauſe he was a King, he could do no injury to his ſubjects, and therefore ſaith, *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned.* But, *They who rule men, may ſin againſt man:* and *David* ſinned in that act againſt man; Firſt, by doing private wrong. Secondly, by giving publick ſcandal. The reaſon then why *David* ſpake thus, was becauſe the ſin he had committed was ſo much againſt God, that though he had grievouſly offended againſt man, in taking away the life of one ſubject, the chaſtity of another, and by endangering the whole army to compaſs a cover for his ſin, yet, in this, his ſin exceeded in ſinfulneſs, that he ſinned againſt God; and therefore he ſaith, *Againſt thee, thee only*; or, take it comparatively, the ſin is ſo much againſt thee, that what is againſt any other is not worth the naming. *God is not only wronged, but he is chiefly wronged in every ſin.* As, becauſe in the wrong done to the life or eſtate of a ſubject, the King is chiefly wronged, therefore all Inditements run in this ſtile, *Againſt the peace of our Soveraign Lord the King, his Crown and Dignity.* Laſtly, That place may be underſtood in the ſecond ſenſe of, *Againſt thee*, that is, *Before thee*; and ſo it ſeems to be expounded in the latter part, *Againſt thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight*, that is, though others took no notice of this, though it was done in ſecret (2 *Sam.*12.12.) yet it was committed clearly and plainly before thine eyes; thine eyes, which are ten thouſand times brighter then the Sun, beheld me in the darkneſs of that folly; and therefore againſt thee have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight; as noting, that though it were conceal'd and hidden from men, yet it could not be conceal'd and hidden from God. *If thy children have ſinned againſt him.*

לְךָ לְכַדְּךָ *Tibi, tibi ſoli.*

And

And he have cast them away for their transgression.

Bildads position is true in it self, but false in the application, *If thy children have sinned against him.* It is a truth that godly parents may have wicked children. Grace doth not alwayes run in a bloud. But it was unevident unto *Bildad* that *Jobs* children had sinned against God in his sense. It is not the common sinner whom *Bildad* meaneth; by sinning against God he intends not the inevitable actings of sinful nature, but the voluntary studied improvements, heightnings, and provocations of sinful nature.

Further, In that he concludes, *They were cast away for their transgression:* He faileth again. It is a truth, that sin is the meritorious cause of punishment, *Thy destruction is from thy self*, saith the Lord, *Hos.*13.9. *Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee*, Jer.4.18. Sin will help us to sorrow enough. Yet this is not a truth, that every man is afflicted for his sin. As no man knows the love or hatred of God: so no man knows the sinne or holiness of man by all that is before him: we cannot argue every one is cast away for his transgression, because he is cast away.

He hath cast them away for their transgression.

ישלחם:ביד פשעם

The Hebrew is very elegant, *He hath sent them away in the hand of their transgression:* or, *He hath put them into the hand of their transgression.* M. *Broughton* translates it so. *As thy children have sinned against him: so he hath sent them into the hand of their trespasses. Into the hand*, that is, into the power, as (*Chap.*5.20.) *the hand of the Sword*, is, the power of the Sword: and (*Psal.*63.10.) *They shall fall by the Sword*; the Hbbrew is, *They shall fall by the hand of the Sword.* Then, *He hath delivered them into the hand of their transgression*, is, into the power of their transgression.

שלח

Simpliciter mittere aut ejicere significat, quasi cum recto tramite aberrassent aberranti copiam pro libidine fecisset.

There are two things considerable about this expression of sending or giving up into the hand of transgression.

1. It may note, That God had delivered up *Jobs* children unto the raign or dominion of their own sinful hearts, or had laid the raines in their necks, suffering their lusts to hurry them whither they would, to carry them captive unto every sinne, and rush them head-long into every evil. The word----here used, signifies either simply, to send, or violently to cast, or to put a thing away from us: and so, it is as if *Bildad* had said, *For as much as thy*

thy children would sin against God, he suffered them to sin their fill; they being wicked, he gave them up to do all wickednesses; They love to wander from him, and he let them wander. We have this sense of the word (*Prov.29. 15.*) *A child left unto himself brings his mother to shame:* The Hebrew is, *A child sent away, sent to himself, or put into his own hands.* A child sent away to himself, or left alone, bringeth shame, that is, will certainly run into vile and enormious courses, to the shame of her that bare him. A child left, or sent to himself, is one that hath no guide, no governour, no instructour but himself. *A man that will learn only of himself, hath but a fool to his Master.* How much more then a weak child; what a master, what a tutor hath a child, if he have none but himself? To be *left or sent out to themselves*, is, to have none to counsel, or advise them in a right way, or to give them any stop and check in an ill way. The character that *Paul* and *Barnabas* gave of the former times, when they preached to the Heathens at *Lystra*, was this, (*Act.14.16.*) *We exhort you to turn unto the living God that made heaven and earth, who in times past suffered all Nations to walk in their own wayes.* He let them go, and never staied them at all, they had no bridle of restraint, not so much as a word to bring them back; *He suffered all Nations*, as if he had said, *He left them in the hand of their transgression*, that their own evil hearts should do what they would with them. In which sense we may also understand that place (*Acts 17.30.*) when *Paul* at *Athens* disputed with the Philosophers, he tels them that now God began to look towards them, and had sent them the knowledge of Christ, *The times of that ignorance God winked at; but now he calleth all men every where to repent.* The words undergoe a two-fold interpretation; Some thus, to note the indulgence of God, *The time past of that ignorance God winked at*; that is, he did not deal severely and strictly with them, when they sinned, because they had no means, or so little means to keep them from sin. And there is a truth in it, for though ignorance doth not totally excuse sin, yet it doth abate the degree and measure of sin. But there is another sense, which I rather embrace, *The times of that ignorance God winked at*; that is, in those times wherein there was so much darkness and blindness in the world, God let men go on in their sin: they sinned, and he never called upon them, he never opposed them, or sent any to teach them better. God did not manifest his will to them as unto the Jews, *Psal.*147.19,20. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob,*

Nihil aliud sibi volunt Pauli verba quam cæcitati addictos fuisse homines, donec se illis Deus pate faciat. Calv.

Jacob, his statutes and judgements unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with any Nation, &c. So that this winking is opposed to favour, rather then to justice. To have the eye upon a place, or upon persons, is to shew them favour, 1 *Kin.*8.29. The latter branch clears this meaning, *But now he calleth all men every where to repent:* now he doth not leave men in the hands of their transgressions: he doth not wink and let them do what they list; now Gospel-light is risen to the world, and there are many sent out to call in and reclaim wandring prodigals, many to cry, *Return, Return.* He speaks of it as of the mercy and priviledge of that age, beyond what the former ages had enjoyed. That of the same Apostle hath a parallel sense (*Rom.* 1.20. & 26.) where describing the dealings of God with the *Gentiles*, who sinned against the light of Nature, he concludes, Therefore God left them in the darkness of Nature, in the worst of nature: they came not up so high, as the principles of nature might have led them in the worship of God, therefore he left them below the principles of nature in the things of man, *He gave them up to vile affections*, which is as much as to say, *He put them in the hands of their transgressions.* And vers.28. *He gave them over to a reprobate mind*, to a mind that could not judge aright, which had not a true understanding of any thing: Hence they elected the worst, and reprobated the best things. The like we have (*Psal.* 81. 11.) of Gods own people the Jews, *So I gave them up unto their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels.* The Hebrew is, *I sent them into the pertinacy of their hearts*, because I had so often called upon them, and they would not hearken, nor return unto me, therefore I said, forasmuch as you will not hear, you shall not hear; because you will not obey, you shall have none to call you to obedience; follow the counsels of your own hearts, as long as you will. This is *the first sense*, *of putting or sending them into the hand of their transgression*, scil. a leaving them to the raign of their lusts.

Expulit eos è mundo propter prævaricationem. Pagn. *Permisit eis pervenire, quod scelus eorum postulabat.* Tygur.

Secondly, (Which is the sense our translation holds out) *Thou hast left them, or sent them into the hand of their transgression*; That is, Thou hast left them in those evils, which transgressions did deserve and call for. Our reading carries that meaning, *He hath cast them away for their transgression*: Others thus, *He hath thrust them out of the world for their transgression*, *He hath suffered that to befall them which their transgression called for.* According to these, the sense is, *Thy children sinned against him; and he hath let those evils*

which

which their ſin deſerved fall upon them; He hath rewarded them according to their iniquity (Iſa. 64. 6,7.) *Our iniquities like the wind have taken us away: Thou haſt hid thy face from us, and haſt conſumed* (or melted) *us, becauſe of our iniquities.* The Hebrew is, *Thou haſt conſumed or melted us in the hand, or in the power of our iniquities.* And ſomewhat parallel to this ſenſe, is that (*Gen.* 4. 6.) *If thou doſt ill* (ſaith God to *Cain*) *ſin lies at the door*; As if he had ſaid, thou ſhalt be given into the hand of ſin preſently, thy ſin ſhall arreſt thee, and bring thoſe evils upon thee which it deſerveth; thou ſhalt not need any other puniſhment, then thy own wickedneſs.

Alliſiſti nos in manu iniqui tatis noſtræ. Vul.

Hands and power are aſcribed to ſin, becauſe God gives men over to thoſe puniſhments which their ſins challenge at his hands. Some ſins have a louder voice then others; but every ſin unpardoned (the mouth whereof is not ſtopt by the blood of Chriſt) cries to God for vengeance, till God put the ſinner into the hand of ſin, that he may at once receive pay for, and from his own folly. Obſerve from the former interpretation, Firſt, That

The Lord doth often in judgement give man up to the power of his ſinful luſts.

This is a general truth, though we cannot draw it down to the inſtance of *Jobs* children: the Lord in wrath leaves man to himſelf. Every man by nature ſins freely, and many are left by God to a judiciary freedome in ſinning. He cannot reſtrain himſelf, and ſometimes God will not reſtrain him, but lets him take his fill of ſin, and be as wicked as he will (Rev. 22. 11.) *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; he that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill.* This permiſſion is the higheſt and ſoreſt affliction. This liberty is worſe then any bondage. Thus alſo the Church leaves thoſe to their ignorance, who obſtinately refuſe inſtruction (1 Cor. 14. 38.) *He that is ignorant, let him be ignorant ſtill.* Thoſe ſouls are in a deſperate condition, who are put out of the care either of God or of his Church. Secondly, Obſerve, That

Sin is a puniſhment.

Sin is the puniſhment of ſin: Thy children ſinned againſt him, and he gave them into the hand of their ſin; he never goes unpuniſhed for ſin, who ſins and repents not. Thou, Lord (ſaith one of the Ancients) haſt decreed it, and ſo it is, that every evil mind is it's own ſcourge. The Apoſtle tells us (*Heb.* 10. 31) that *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God*: it is indeed;

Tu, Domine, diviſti & ita eſt, ut omnis malus animus ſibi ipſi ſit pœna. Auguſt.

and it is as fearful a thing to fall into the hand of deadly ſins, or dead works. How dreadful a thing is it to be under the power and tyranny of our own hearts. The committing of ſin is worſe then the enduring of trouble. The Lord doth not only puniſh men according to their ſins. but he makes their ſin their puniſhment, yea, their ſins are their puniſhers. He puts them into the hand of ſin, as into the hands of a tormentor. A Heathen could threaten a wicked man, thus, *His manners ſhall be his revenge.* Holineſs carries its reward with it, and though no creature will recompenſe the good we do, yet doing good is a recompenſe. In keeping the Commandments of God, there is an exceeding great reward, *Pſal.* 19. 11. The act of keeping them is a reward, as well as the iſſue. *A good work is pay enough to the worker.* So alſo is an evil work, Prov. 1. 32. *The turning away of the ſimple ſhall ſlay him.* A ſimple child, that will not be ruled, counſelled or ordered (ſuch *Solomon* ſpeaks of, *Ye ſimple ones, how long will ye love ſimplicity?* That is, your own fooliſh, vain wayes.) *The turning away of ſuch* ſimple ones from the counſel of the wiſe, ſhall ſlay them. The way of ſin is death, as well as the end or wages of it. *As ſaith the Proverb of the Ancients* (they are the words of *David* concerning *Saul*, 1 Sam. 24. 14.) *Wickedneſs proceedeth from the wicked, but mine hand ſhall not be upon him.* *David* knew that *Saul* was a man ſo wicked, that he needed no other revenger but his own ſelf, his own ſin would bring miſery enough upon him: therefore ſaith he, *Wickedneſs proceedeth from the wicked*, that is, the puniſhment of wickedneſs proceedeth from the wicked man himſelf. Obſerve the occaſion of thoſe words, it was when ſome about *David* adviſed him to ſlay *Saul*, not I, ſaith he, *my hand ſhall not be upon him*, I know he is a man ſo given up to ſin, ſo enſlaved to his own vile affections, that there's enough upon him already, and in a ſhort time more will be upon him, *Wickedneſs proceedeth from the wicked, but mine hand ſhall not be upon him*; I will leave him to the hand of his ſin, which is his plague already, and which in a little time will attach him, and do me right, though he never would. When God took up a reſolution againſt his own people, that he would not hear or be intreated, and proteſted his mind could not be towards them, he ſaith (Jer. 15. 2.) *Let them go forth ſuch as are for the ſword to the ſword, and ſuch as are for the famine, to the famine, and ſuch as are for the captivity, to the captivity.* This was a dreadful ſentence; but for God to ſay to a people, Let them go forth in the

Vlciſcentur eum mores ſui, Cicero ad Atticum.

the wayes of their sin; he that is for drunkenness, to be drunk; he that is for uncleanness, to be unclean; he that is for pride, to be proud; he that is for swearing, to oaths; and he that is for envie, to be envious; and he that is for idolatry, to his idols. O how unconceivably miserable are such a people! To be left in the hand of these sins, is a spiritual judgement; and these sins will quickly bring in temporal judgements, and not long hence eternal.

From the latter interpretation, Observe,

Sin shall not alway go away unpunished by outward, sensible evils.

God will sink and cast men away for their transgressions. If sin be in the house, punishment lies at the doors, and will turn the lock and open it, or break it open upon the sinner. And though he hide himself in vaults or secret corners, yet his iniquity will find him out. *He that will not cast away his trangression, shall be cast away for his trangression*, whether he will or no.

So much for these words, wherein *Bildad* sets before *Job* the sinfulness of his children, thereby to vindicate the justice of God in giving them up to the dominion of their sin, or to destruction for their sins. In the next words he adviseth *Job* to take heed by their harms, and assures him of happy success, in case he doe. As if he had said, though they perished in their trangressions, yet do not thou despair. For,

Vers. 5. *If thou wouldst seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty*, &c.

God hath been just in punishing thy children, and he will be merciful in pardoning thee, in accepting thy person, in prospering thy estate, if now at last thou apply thy self to seek him diligently; *Though thy children have fallen into the hand of their transgression, yet there is hope that thou mayest escape*. Thus he deals with him in a way of counsel, as *Eliphaz* had done before, Chap 5. v. 8. *I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause*; this is the counsel I give thee, and the course I would take my self. *Bildad* speaks the same in effect, and almost in the letter; *If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication unto the Almighty*. &c, *He would awake for thee.*

There are two parts of *Bildads* counsel.

1. To humble himself in prayer, ver. 5.

2. To purge himself by repentance, ver. 6.

Or, we may look upon this counsel as a pattern of repentance, and turning to God, in three things.

1. To seek unto God.
2. To acknowledge our own unworthiness to receive any mercy from God.
3. To be sincere and upright-hearted with God in both.

If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes.

שחר *Est quasi mane vigilare aut diluculare Deum. Diligenter, sedulo, et magno studio quærere. Qui mane surgit precandi causa, dicitur manicare Deum.* Drus.

We have met with the word more then once before; and in strictness of translation it sounds thus much, *If thou wouldest seek unto God in the morning*; or, *if thou wouldest morning God*, be with him early in the morning, that is, if thou wouldest seek unto him diligently: they that come in the morning about business, are diligent in their business. The Apostles rule is (*Heb.* 3.) *To day harden not your hearts*; but here *Bildad* adviseth, *While it is morning*, which is the first part or beginning of the day, pour out thy heart to God. So then, it may be taken for seeking God either at the first of the day, the morning; or, for any earnest, diligent and fervent seeking unto God in any part of the day; To seek God diligently, though in the night, is according to this Hebraisme, a seeking him in the morning.

It was an ancient custome to seek God in the morning (take it in the letter) early in the morning. *David* professes this, *Psalm* 5. 3. *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.* And Heathens, by the light of nature, took this course in their profane and superstitious worship. *Herodotus* in his tenth book, tels of the *Persian Magi*, who addressed themselves early in the morning to seek their false Gods. And the Primitive Christians were wondered at for their early devotions. *Pliny* in an Epistle to *Trajan* and *Tertullian* in his Apologeticks for the Christians, report their assemblies before day-break to pray and call upon God. And there hath been, and still is a superstitious abuse of this among the Papists, who call their morning prayers, their *Mattins*, because they begin early in the morning.

Herodot *l.* 10. Plin. *Ep.* 57. *ad* Trajan. Tertul. *Apol. cap.* 2.

Hence observe, First,

Prayer is our seeking unto God.

That's the general description of prayer. When we pray, our work is to get near to God, to find God; every soul that prayes indeed,

indeed, feels it ſelf at a loſs for ſomewhat, that God only can beſtow. In God all that we want is to be found, and therefore he invites us to ſeek him. In this life the Saints are a generation of ſeekers: In the next, they ſhall be a generation of enjoyers; when God is fully found, there's nothing more to be ſought: Having him, we have all. The work of Heaven is to bleſs God for what we have found, not to ſeek him for what we want.

Secondly, *God muſt be ſought unto without delay.*

As it is with vows, ſo with prayers, *defer not to pay them*; defer not to pray, *Iſa.* 55. 6. *Seek him whileſt he may be found.* Mat. 6. 33. *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God*; firſt in time; not only chiefly, but early, put not God behind in the latter part of the day, or in the latter end of your buſineſſes. It is beſt to begin with him who is beſt.

Thirdly, *God muſt be ſought unto with diligence.*

We muſt lay our ſtrength and ſpirits out in ſeeking God. It is not a ſleight enquiry which finds out God. We read that he is found of ſome who ſeek him not at all, but that he is found of any who ſeek him negligently, we read not. Free-grace prevents thoſe who have no ability to ſeek him, but it meets not thoſe who will not lay out their abilities in ſeeking him. *If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God betimes,*

And make thy ſupplication to the Almighty.

The word which we tranſlate (*Make thy ſupplication*) is very ſignificant of the manner how we ſhould ſeek unto God, namely, bottoming our ſelves upon free-grace alone. A thought of our own worth is inconſiſtent with a *ſupplication*; *call upon the Almighty for pity*, ſaith M. *Broughton*. When we ſupplicate, we deſire that to be done for us, for which there is no reaſon in us why it ſhould be done. *To make ſupplication*, is to ſeek help or releif freely or *gratis*, acknowledging there is nothing in us worthy of love. That *adverb* uſed in the firſt, & repeated in the ſecond Chapter, where the devil objects, *Doth Job ſerve God for nought*, that is, without reſpect of good pay for his pains from God, that *adverb* (I ſay) comes from this *verb*. As we ought to ſerve God (in this ſenſe) for nought, and not like mercenaries for our hire: So God helps us for nought, without looking to any thing in us, or from us, as an hire of his help. The Baptiſt had his name (*John*) from this word,

Verbum חנן *denotat gratuitam illam commiſerationem, quæ ſine ullo merito impenditur.*

word either because he preached the free grace of God in Christ, then exhibited; or because God bestowed him upon his parents in their old age, as a special grace and favour: *The poor* (saith *Solomon*, Prov. 18. 23.) *useth intreaties*; some render it thus, *The poor maketh, or speaketh supplications*; a poor man hath nothing of desert to plead, why he should receive your charity, but he lies at your feet, and begs somewhat, because he is in want, because misery hath arrested and taken hold upon him: *The poor useth intreaties*, he doth not call for any thing of right, and he will not wrest any thing from you by force; he only supplicates your favour. We in our drawing nigh unto God should pray for grace and favour, as a poor man, begging an alms, who makes his plea, that he is poor. So then, *Bildads* counsel to *Job* is this, *Stand not upon thy tearms with God, plead not thine own integrity, and good works*, but cast thy self at his feet for mercy, *Make thy supplication unto him.* The word is used by *Moses Deut.* 3. 23. when he describeth his own unbelief, for which God said he should not go into *Canaan*, *And I besought the Lord at that time, saying*, &c. When *Moses* perceived God was angry, he did not reckon his former good services to ballance this failing, but sought unto God for mercy, as one that had never done him any service at all. And as man expresses his desires of free grace by this word, so doth the Lord his highest actings of it, *Exod.* 33. 19. *I will be gracious unto whom I will be gracious.* To shew, that to *make supplication*, is, to desire the Lord to be gracious: and that to be gracious is to do that, which is desired *by a supplication*; the same word in the Hebrew signifies, both an act of lowest humility in us, namely a making a supplication, and an act of highest Grace in God, namely the granting of a supplication. Hence observe,

First, *In seeking God we must look to receive all from his free-grace and undeserved favour.*

Seek unto God, and make thy supplycation to him. Mercy in God is the spring of all the mercies received by man. What can a beggar, who comes to a King, ask upon desert? That's the condition of every one that comes to God: we are a company of beggars, the riches both of temporal and spiritual blessings are treasur'd up in God. *Blessed are the poor in spirit*, they who look upon themselves as mean and low, as not having a rag of goodness about them, as emptied of themselves, are the vessels which God will fill, *He that is full loatheth a hony-comb*; and he that thinks he is full, is loathed

loathed so much by God, that his real emptiness shall never be filled. When *Jacob* held God so fast that he would not let him go without a blessing, he had quite let go all hold, yea, or opinion of his worthiness to receive a blessing, *I am less then the least of all thy mercies*, (Gen. 32. 10.) Then we are fit to receive great things from God, when we are little, and then fittest, when we are least in our own eyes. Yea, we must supplicate God, not only as a beggar, but as a traitor or a rebel doth a King: who hath not only nothing in him to commend him to his acceptance, or procure his favour, but much to provoke his wrath, and incur the weight of his displeasure. Every sin in it self renders us rebels against God. And though his own people, coming unto him in Christ, are under another notion, they are his sons, yet, even they ought to have such apprehensions of themselves for sin, *Abraham beleived in him that justifieth the ungodly*, Rom. 4. 5. Even *Abraham*, after he was justified in the sight of God through faith, looked upon himself as ungodly, in reference to his own works. In all our approaches to God, we should reflect upon our selves, not only as having many wants, and no worthiness, but as having many sins, and (of our own) no goodness. God (in justice) visits iniquity upon them that hate him, (Exod. 20. 6.) *And he sheweth mercy unto thousands of them that love him, and keep his Commandments*; they who love God and keep his Commandments, receive all from mercy. Justice punisheth those who break the Commandment, but mercy doth them good who keep the Commandments. *We have at any time sin enough to merit the wrath of God; but we never have goodness enough to merit his favour.* And as no objection from our sinfulness can obstruct the way of free-grace from moving towards us: so no argument from our holiness can open the way, for free-grace to move towards us. In all our dutyes we are to lye in the dust, yea, we are to lay our duties in the dust, and to seek all of God in humble supplications.

Consider this verse in connexion with the former, and then two points are observable from it. *Bildad* assuring *Job*, that though his sons had fallen by their sin, yet, if himself would seek unto God, and make his supplication, it might be well with him, teacheth us,

First, *That the falls of others, whether into sin or under judgement for sin should be warning to us.*

Thou seest what is become of thy sons: let them be as a looking-glass

glass for thee. Children may teach their parents, parents are often whipt upon their childrens backs. The hand of God upon others points towards us, and while they are smitten we are instructed. The Apostle sums up the most remarkable judgements which fell upon the Jews in their passage from *Egypt* to *Canaan*, and closeth all with this application to Christians, *These things happened unto them as ensamples, and they are written for our admonition*, &c. *to the intent that we should not lust*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 11. As if he had said, God let them fall into the hand of their sins, and their fall may help us to keep our feet. Their falls were *types* (so the word is) these things happened unto them *tipically*, in them we may see what God will do with us, if we take their course, and go their way.

τύπος, *proprie significat notâ insculptâ pulsatione seu percussione effectam.* Bezain John 20.25. τύπος περὶ τὸ πατάσσειν, *percutere. Unde Ars Typographica.*

The Greek is very elegant and expressive of this sense. For a *type* is such a form or representation of a thing, as is made by hard pressing or striking of it, such as we see in stamps and seals. It is the leaving of a mark with a blow; implying, that the Lord by those stroaks upon his ancient people, left marks upon their bodies or printed letters there (the Greek word for a Printer is a Typewriter) which were legible to their posterity, and are to this day. Hence the scar which the nails made in the hands of our blessed Saviour upon the cross, is called, *The print of the nails*; or, *The type of the nails*, Joh. 20. 25. Such a type or print sufferings leave behind them. How many such *types* have we at this day? Where can we goe, but we may see the print of the Sword, and thrust our hands into the wounded sides, *Let us not be faithless but beleiving?* The Apostle *Peter*, (2 Epist. 2. 6.) brings the Apostate Angels, the old world, filthy *Sodome*, as admonitory examples unto those that should live ungodly. They made themselves evil examples by committing sin, and God made them good ensamples by punishing them for their sin.

Secondly, From the connexion, observe,

That they who are equal in sin, may be unequal in punishment.

Job was (in the judgement of his friends) as deep in sin as his children; but though he had sinn'd like them, or more then they, yet he might be unlike them in suffering, or suffer less then they. God (saith *Bildad*) hath taken them quite away, he hath but wounded you, and if you seek unto God he is ready to heal you. The same sinners for matter, are in heaven and in hell, that is, take two who have

have committed the same sins for matter; and for degree also (as sin is a transgression of the Law) and the one of these may be found in heaven, and the other in Hell at the last day. Yea, I believe, there are many in heaven, that have committed greater sins then some that are in Hell. It is not the matter of sinne committed, but the obstinacy, impenitency, or unbelief of the sinner, which bindes on the guilt, and seals up the sinner to judgements temporal, and to condemnation eternal.

Verse 6. *If thou wert pure and upright, he would awaken for thee, &c.*

Bildad counsels *Job* to seek God, yet he puts in a caution, *If thou wert pure and upright:* As if he had said, I advise thee to seek unto God, and to make thy supplication to him; but take heed of doing this with a purpose to continue in thy sinne, *If thou wouldst seek unto God, and make thy supplication to him in purity, and uprightness of heart, He would awaken for thee.* Holy prayers awake God. Be holy, and thou shalt be sure of audience and acceptance when thou prayest.

In the former verse he gave advice for the duty to be performed, here he gives advice in reference to the person who is to perform the duty. Thy duty is to seek unto God, and to make supplication to the Almighty, but look thine one heart be pure and upright. Take heed of coming to a holy God in thine unholiness.

Pure and upright.) The word signifieth to shine or glister, as glass or crystall, noting, that the purity of our lives in holiness shines as light, *Matth.* 5. *Let your light so shine before men.* The works of the Saints should be clear as Crystal. The word is used (*Lam.* 4.7.) to set forth the exactest beauty, *Her Nazarites were purer then snow, they were whiter then milk, they were more ruddy in body then rubies, their polishing was of Saphyr.* The Oil (*Levit.* 24.2.) and the frankincense (*Exod.* 30.4.) appointed for the use of the Sanctuary, are both thus expressed, *pure oil, pure frankincense*, shining Oil, or shining Frankincense, transparent Oil, &c. such as you may look thorow, not obscure or dark. The oyl and frankincense were a type of their purity, who had communion with God in holy things. The same word is used by *David*, complaining under a temptation (*Psal.* 73.15.) of lost labour, or labour in vain in washing himself. Some wash in vain, because they are still unclean,

Thus luci dissimum, pellucidum.

unclean, and get not out their ſpots; others think they waſh in vain, becauſe, though clean, they cannot obtain their comforts. Thus *David* thought he had waſhed in vain, *I ſaid, Verily I have cleanſed mine heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency, for I am chaſtened*, &c. *David* by cleanſing got the ſin-ſpots out as well as moſt men, but he could not get the affliction ſpots out, this was his temptation. Sinne is a blot, a ſpot, an uncleanneſs, a filthineſs; holineſs is purity, beauty, honour, light; Things which have the greateſt excellency and luſtre, are but the ſhadowes of holineſs.

Peccatum vocatur macula, & ſanctitas mundities, quod quæ maculata & infecta erant habebantur profana & divino conſpectui indigna.

There is a twofold purity: Firſt, the purity of our natures, which is received at converſion. Secondly, the purity of our converſations, which is renewed by repentance; we may underſtand both, or either in this place.

Purum ad cor pertinet, rectum ad actiones, ut dicat purum corde rectum opere. Druſ.

And upright.) It is the word uſed in the firſt verſe of the firſt Chapter, *Perfect and upright*. Here *pure and upright*: we may thus diſtinguiſh them: purity referres to outward acted holineſs, or holineſs of life, and uprightneſs to inward ſincerity, or holineſs of the heart; and ſo his meaning is, if thou wert pure in thy wayes, and ſincere in thine ends; if thy outward man, and inward man were waſhed and reformed, *Then he would awake*, &c. Obſerve hence,

Firſt, *Holy perſons are fit for holy duties, and only they.*

Sin is our ſeparation from God, and holy duties are acts of communion with him: how then ſhall ſin and duty ſtand together?

Make thy ſupplication, ſeek unto God, but be thou pure and upright. What have unholy perſons to doe about holy things? God cannot like the ſervices of thoſe who are unlike him. Prayer purifies, yet purifying muſt be a preparative to prayer, *Pſal.* 66.18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart* (if I lodge filthineſs there) *God will not hear me*; he will not regard my prayer. The blind man ſaw this truth, *Joh.*9.31. (it ſeems this was a received maxime among them) *God heareth not ſinners.* We are commanded to pray, *lifting up pure hands*, 1 Tim. 2. 8. An Heathen being at Sea in a great ſtorm, and perceiving many wicked wretches with him in the ſhip, calling upon the gods, *O* (ſaith he) *forbear prayer, hold your tongues, I would not have the gods take notice that you are here, they will ſure drown us all if they do.* If an heathen by the light of nature could ſay this, much more may we by the light of Scripture, *That God heareth not ſinners*, Iſa. 1. *When you ſpread forth your hands*

Silete (inquit) ne vos hic navigare dii ſentiunt. Braſ.

hands, I will hide mine eyes from you, yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear, your hands are full of bloud. As he speaks out the fulness of the grace of God (*Come let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow*, &c.) So also the necessity of gracious purity in man, *Wash ye, make ye clean*, &c. Observe,

Secondly, *The prayers of the pure and upright are prevailing prayers.*

In the next words God awakes, *Jam.*5.16. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Fervency of prayer effects nothing, unless the person praying be righteous. God is not melted into compassion by the heat of our words, but by the holiness of our hearts. In the prayer of a righteous man there is strength, prevailing strength, such, as God himself yeilds to. *As a Prince thou hast power with God, and hast prevailed*, saith he to *Jacob*, when he wrestled with him. Observe,

Thirdly, *It is no way contrary to the doctrine of free-grace to say we must be holy, if we desire to be heard.*

Bildads doctrine is an excellent piece of Divinity, Though he said before, Thou must seek unto God, and make supplication to him, that out of his free-grace he would bestow a blessing upon thee, yet he adds, *If thou wert pure and upright.* Though we are not heard, because we are pure and upright, yet none can come with a warrantable confidence to be heard in their impurity and hypocrisie: if they do, God will reject their confidences, and they shall not prosper in them. It is impudence, not confidence, to make supplication to God with a reserve, or a resolve in secret, to go on in sinne. The greatest sinners in the world may come to God, they that are most impure and filthy, may find favour; yet every man that cometh unto God, must come with this desire, to have his impurities removed, and his backslidings healed. *Unto the wicked, saith God, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or to take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee*, Psal.50.16. It no way crosses the doctrine of grace, when with the same breath we say, God will do us good freely for his own names sake, and that, we must be pure and upright who come to God: *With the pure thou wilt shew thy self pure, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thy self upright, and with the froward thou wilt shew thy self froward*, Psal.18.25,26. But doth the Lord take colour from every one he meets, or change his tem-

per as the company changes? That's the weakneſs of ſinful man, he cannot do ſo, with whom there is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of changing. God is pure and upright with the unclean and hypocritical, as well as with the pure and upright, and his actions ſhew him to be ſo. God ſhewes himſelf froward with the froward, when he deals with them, as he hath ſaid he will deal with the froward; deny them, and reject them. God ſhewes himſelf pure with the pure, when he deals with them as he hath ſaid he will; hear them and accept them. Though there be nothing in purity and ſincerity, which deſerveth mercy, yet we cannot expect mercy without them. Our comforts are not grounded upon our graces, but our comforts are the fruits or conſequents of our graces.

Bildad having ſhewed *Job* his duty, ſhews him a promiſe of mercy, *If thou wert pure and upright, ſurely now he would awake for thee.* There is a three-fold gradation of mercy in this promiſe.

1. That God would { Awake for him.
2. That God would { Proſper, or pacifie his habitation.
3. That God would { Abundantly encreaſe and multiply him in his latter end.

The firſt ſtep of mercy, is, *That God would awake for him.* Surely now he would awake for thee. And there are three things obſervable about this.

Firſt, The certainty of it, in the word (*Surely*) without all doubt; or, peradventure if thou wouldeſt thus ſeek to him, *He would awake.*

Secondly, The ſpeedineſs of it; *Surely now* he would awake, (*Now*) without delay or demur; thou ſhouldeſt no ſooner ſeek to God, but finde an anſwer of mercy from him.

Thirdly, The benefit of it to *Job*, *He would awake for thee.* For *Job* might ſay, I may awaken a ſleepie Lion to riſe up againſt me; יעיר עליך God may be angry with my prayer, and inſtead of bleſſing pour out ſome further judgement upon me: No, ſaith *Bildad*, I aſſure thee, if thou thus ſeek to him, *He will awake for thee*, not againſt thee.

God ſometimes awakes againſt us, *Jer.* 31.28. *It ſhall come to paſs, that as I have watched over them, to pluck up and to break down, and to deſtroy, and to afflict, ſo will I watch over them to build and to plant, ſaith the Lord.* As the Lord would watch to do them a good turn; ſo he had watcht to do them (as we ſpeak) a ſhrewd

turn.

turn. He threatens them with ſuch a watchfulneſs, *Chap.*44.27. *I will watch over them for evil, and not for good.* When we are dull and ſleepy in doing the will of God, he will be watchful and active to afflict us. And when men cannot ſleep till they do evil, God will not ſleep till he brings evil. So *Daniel*, in the ninth of that Propheſie and the 14 *verſe*, having humbled himſelf before God in prayer and faſting, and confeſſed the ſins of the people, concludes, *Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us.* God not only awakes, but watches to do a people evil, who have long abuſed his goodneſs; as men in malicioufneſs of ſpirit watch for advantages, and ſpie out opportunities to revenge themſelves, *All my familiars watch for my halting*, ſaith *Jeremy*, *Chap.* 20.10. So the Lord in abundant holineſs and exactneſs of juſtice, though with a great deal of wrath and ſeverity, watches to revenge himſelf of a wicked people. He takes all opportunities and advantages againſt them, *Thou haſt watched evil, and brought it upon us.* His love to a returning people is as vigilant, as his anger againſt a backſliding people.

Surely now he would awake for thee.

Awake.) The word ſignifies both to awake, and to ariſe. There are two interpretations of this awaking.

Some take the words tranſitively, thus. *He will awake good for thee.* Not, of *Job* awakening God by prayer, but of God awakening proſperity, or ſtirring up bleſſings for *Job*. As if *Bildad* had ſaid, *Job, now bleſſings are (as it were) aſleep, but if thou pray, God will awaken them; He will ſtir up mercies for thee, he will cure thy broken condition, he will reſtore that which is fallen, repair that which is ruined, and fetch thee up out of the grave of thy deſolate eſtat.* As a mans ſpirits, gifts, yea graces, are ſometime aſleep and need awakening, ſo alſo are, and do our outward comforts. It is frequent in Scripture to call the repairing of a mans eſtate, or the bringing of good to him, the raiſing of him up, *He raiſeth the poor out of the duſt*; he awakens them out of that low condition. *Job* was in the duſt, and his children in the grave: God made a reſurrection of both for him. That's a good ſenſe.

Suſcitabit ſuper te bonum. Tranſitivè accipitur; excitabit ſuper te, ſc. bonum quod nunc inte ſopitum eſt.

But rather underſtand it (as our tranſlation reads) of *God awakening, He will awake for thee.*

He will awake.) The Pſalmiſt aſſures us (Pſal. 121.4.) *He that keepeth Iſrael doth neither ſlumber nor ſleep.* God never ſleepeth:

eth: How is it then ſaid, that God awakes:

For the opening of this metaphor; Firſt, As, The Church confeſſes and profeſſes (Cant. 5. 2.) *I ſleep, but my heart waketh*; when the Church is aſleep, yet her heart is awake towards God: So much more, when in regard of outward providences God ſeems to be aſleep, his heart is awake toward his Church, his heart (*ſcil.* his affection, *&c.*) never ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth.

Secondly, God is ſaid to ſleep, when he doth not anſwer our prayers; and when he hears prayer, then he is ſaid to awake. Hence the Septuagint render this text, not as we, *He will awake*; but, *He will hear thy prayer for deliverance.*

δεήσεως ἐπακούσεταί σου. *Deprecationem exaudiet tuam*, Sept.

Thirdly, God ſleeps, not in regard of the act, but the conſequents of ſleep. Natural ſleep is the binding or locking up of the ſenſes. The eye and ear of God is never bound. But to mans apprehenſion the affairs of the world paſs, as if God did neither hear nor ſee. When men are aſleep things are done, which they can take no notice of, much leſs ſtop and prevent. The Parable tels us (Mat. 13.) *While men ſlept, the envious man came and ſowed tares:* While the houſholder ſlept, the thief brake the houſe: and the Phariſees direct the watchmen to ſay of Chriſt in the ſepulchre, *While we ſlept his Diſciples came and ſtole him away.* So now, when things are ſo carried in the world, as if the God of heaven did not regard or take notice of them; when he doth not prevent or hinder evil; when he doth not ſtop or reſtrain the rage and malice of men; this retiring of himſelf in the way of his providence, is called his ſleep.

Dormire videtur cum te reliquit in his calamitatibus. Druſ.

The complaint runs high, *Pſal.* 44. 9, *&c. Lord, thou goeſt not forth with our Armies, we are become a reproach unto our enemies, Thou ſelleſt thy people for nought; we are killed like ſheep all the day long.* There's a deſcription of the confuſion of things, then followeth (verſ. 23.) *Awake, why ſleepeſt thou, O Lord? Ariſe, caſt us not off for ever; wherefore hideſt thou thy face, and forgetteſt our affliction and our oppreſſion?* Such a time was accounted the ſleeping time of God.

Hence when God in the workings of his providence, ſearcheth out the wicked, and brings them to deſtruction; when he breaks their deſigns, and turns their counſels backwards; when he turns their wickedneſs upon their own heads, and catches them in the ſnare which they have laid for others, then he is ſaid to awake, *Pſ.* 78. 65. *He gave his people over to the ſword, and the fire conſumed the*

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young men; then the Lord awakened as one out of ſleep, and like a giant refreſhed with wine, He ſmote his enemies in the hinder parts, and put them to a perpetual ſhame. Such a time was accounted Gods waking time.

So then, ſleeping and awaking, note only the changes of providence. Hence alſo the providence of God is deſcribed by *an eye* (2 Chron.16.9.) which is the proper organ of ſleeping, or waking; and the exactneſs of providence, is ſet out by *ſeven eyes*, Zech.3.9. The Scripture ſpeaks this language in reference to our ſoul-ſleep and awakening. When we ſin and let things go which way they will in our hearts, without taking any care, or keeping our watch againſt temptation, then we are aſleep in ſinne: And when we begin to conſider our eſtates, and return to our ſelves, when we take notice how it is with us, and ask our hearts the queſtion, *What have we done?* This in a ſpiritual ſenſe is our awakening, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt*, Epheſ.5.14. Our ſpiritual ſleeping and waking are the decayes or quicknings of ſoul-endeavours. And Gods providential ſleeping and waking are the ſeeming ſtops and viſible motions of his power, mercy, and juſtice in the world. This is the awaking which *Bildad* promiſes. *If thou wouldeſt ſeek God, &c. Surely he would awake for thee.*

The words opened teach us.

Firſt, *That holy prayer ſhall certainly be heard.*

If thou make thy ſupplication to him, ſurely he will awake. God cannot ſleep when a poor believing ſoul cries in his ears, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my prayer* (Pſal.66.18.) *But verily God hath heard me, he hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.* What, God turn prayer away? No, he cannot lie ſtill (as I may ſo ſpeak) when prayer knocks at the door, he muſt ariſe and open preſently. That's a ſecond note,

Prayer ſhall be heard preſently.

What preſently? Yes, preſently heard, though not preſently anſwered; *Surely now he will awaken for thee, even now.* Holy prayers are never deferred the hearing, no not a minute, *Iſa.*65.24. *Before they call I will hear, and while they are yet ſpeaking I will anſwer.* In the very act of praying the anſwer came forth: yea the anſwer ſometimes antedates our asking, and the grant cometh before the petition. The giving out of the anſwer may be deferr'd, but the anſwer is not deferr'd. We may be heard, and heard graciouſly, and yet not preſently receive the thing we ask; but every

very prayer is heard and laid up, aſſoon as put up; he hangs it upon the file, he hath it ſafe by him. Prayer receives an anſwer in heaven, aſſoon as ſpoken upon earth, though the anſwer be not returned to us on earth. *God ſleeps not at the prayer of thoſe who are awake in Prayer.* Thirdly, Obſerve,

Prayer is the beſt means to awaken God.

God hath many wayes to awaken man; and he hath directed man a way to awaken himſelf. When we are aſleep he awakeneth us chiefly two wayes. Firſt, by the voice of his word: Secondly, by the voice of his rod. He now awakens us by the loud ſounding trumpet, and the alarms of warre: when God awakeneth us by judgements, it is time for us to awaken him by prayer. We find two things in Scripture which awaken God. Firſt, the prayers of his own people. And ſecondly, the rage and blaſphemy of his enemies, *Pſal.* 78.65. The Prophet having deſcribed the cruelty and rage of the enemy, adds; *Then the Lord awaked as one out of ſleep, and like a mighty man that ſhouteth by reaſon of wine: David* makes this an argument in prayer, (Pſal. 7.) *Becauſe of the rage of mine enemies awake for me to the judgement which thou haſt commanded.* As if he had ſaid, Lord, ſhall mine enemies rage, and wilt thou ſleep? Wilt not thou awake for me? Ariſe, I pray thee. The noiſe of blaſphemy, and the cry of violence from wicked men, ſtir up God when he ſeems to lie aſleep. The noiſe of prayer, the cries and calls of faith in his own people, will not let him ſleep. A man whoſe heart is drenched in the world, and drowned in rivers of earthly pleaſures, prayes himſelf aſleep, and his prayers bring God aſleep to: he ſleeps when he prayes, and God ſleeps at his prayers, that is, God regards not his prayer; he is as one that ſleepeth, as if he heard not what was ſaid. A worldly man doth not hear what he ſpeaks, he knows not what his own requeſts are. God ſleepeth when men are thus aſleep. But when we (as the Apoſtle directs) *watch and pray*, then God awakes at our prayers. As in the former verſe *Job* was counſelled to awake to pray to God, ſo now he is promiſed, That the Lord will awake when he prayeth.

Fourthly, Seeing the Lord is awakened by prayer. We learn, That

Prayer ought to be very ſtrong and fervent.

As men are gradual in their ſleep, ſo is the Lord in his. A man is ſometimes ſo ſlumberingly aſleep that the leaſt noiſe will awake him, you cannot ſtir, but he will hear it. At another time a man is

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so dead asleep, that though you hollow in his ear you cannot awake him, thunder cannot stir him. Sometimes God departs so little, that the least voice calleth him again, he comes at the first word; at another time he is gone so far, that (as to a man in a deep sleep) you must cry and cry again, call and call again, cry aloud before he hears. And we may (in a safe sense) apply that to the true God, which *Elijah* did to that false god *Baal*; when his Priests were calling to him from morning to night, *Elijah* mocking, bids them cry aloud, *it may be* (saith he) *he sleepeth*: We may say (with reverence) thus when any pray to God, and he doth not hear, pray aloud; not in regard of the voice and outward sound, but pray with louder desires of heart, with more fervency and zeal of spirit, *Peradventure God sleepeth*; peradventure he is in a deep sleep at this time, and he will not suddenly be awaked, therefore cry aloud. When God seemed to depart far from the Church of the *Jews*, with how much fervency do they cry after him (Isa. 51. 9.) *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, awake, as in the ancient* &c. They double and treble it upon him, and cry with an out-stretched voice, *Art not thou he that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon?* What a clamour, what a holy stir was here, to awaken God? God himself sometimes seems (as it were) willing to take his rest, as when he said to *Moses*, *Let me alone*; he spake like a man that is in bed, or very sleepy, *Do not trouble me, let me alone*; as he in the Gospel (*Luk.* 11. 7.) when he was awakened in the night to come and give bread unto his neighbours, *Do not trouble me* (saith he) *the doors are shut, and I am in bed with my children, I cannot rise and give thee, let me alone.* Thus in some sense the Lord expresses himself to his people, I am now in bed, do not trouble me, *Let me alone.* What must we do in this case? We must knock harder at the door, as he in the Gospel did, *For whom, though his neighbour would not rise and give him because he was his friend, yet because of his importunity he rises and gives him as many loaves as he needed.* We must be the more importunate to awake God, by how much he seems more unwilling to hear us; our modesty (in this case) pleases him not: we must call and call again: He will take it well at our hands, if we do so. We must give our selves no rest, and let him take none; so the Prophet resolves (Isa. 62. 1.) *For Jerusalems sake, I will take no rest*, I will never give over praying; and at the sixth verse, *I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace*

day nor night, you that make mention of the Lord, keep not ſilence, and give him no reſt, till he eſtabliſh and till he make Jeruſalem a praiſe in the earth. If the Lord ſhould carry it in the preſent anſwers of his providences, as if he were willing to reſt, and deſired not to be troubled in this buſineſs; be not you ſo put off: but with a holy boldneſs and confidence come to him and awaken him: take no anſwer, till ye have an anſwer. He is beſt pleaſed and moſt at eaſe, when (in prayer) we give him no reſt. Laſtly, Obſerve,

If God do but awake for us, all is preſently well with us.

If the eye of God be upon us for good, that brings us in all good: therefore (*Zech.* 2. ult.) when the Church was in her return from *Babylon*, the Prophet concludes with an exultation of ſpirit, *Be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord, for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation*; it is this word, *he is awaked out of his holy habitation, now be ſilent, O all fleſh before the Lord*: All fleſh, ye that are the wicked of the world, ye that are enemies, be ye ſilent, leave your boaſting, your reproaching and blaſpheming, for the Lord is awaked, now he begins to ſtir for his people, he will ſtop your mouths ſhortly: *All fleſh*, takes in the Church and people of God too, *O be ye ſilent*, in regard of your fears and doubtings, murmurings and diſtracted complainings, ſilence all theſe, why? *The Lord is awaked, he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation*; that is, he that ſeemed before to confine himſelf to thoſe higher regions; and as the Atheiſt ſpeaks in *Job*, to walk in the circle of the Heavens, not intermedling with the earth: This God is now awaked, he is raiſed out of his holy habitation, and now ye ſhall know that he orders all things here below: therefore be ſilent, O all fleſh. When Chriſt was aſleep (*Mat.* 8. 25.) *A greivous tempeſt aroſe* (ſaith the text) *inſomuch as the Ship was covered with waves.* When ſtorms and tempeſts are upon the Church, God is then aſleep, though even then he directs the ſtorms, and gives law to the proud waves. But what did the Diſciples in this ſtorme? *They awoke Chriſt, Maſter, ſave us, we periſh*; and as ſoon as ever Chriſt was awakened, *He rebuked the ſtorm, and there was a great calm.* Thus when we are toſt up and down with contrary windes and in danger to be ſplit and ſunk, if God once awake, all is calm. *How quietly may they ſleep for whom God wakes!* I do not ſay they ſhould ſleep careleſly, but confidently they may. God doth not wake for us, to the intent we ſhould ſleep in ſecurity; but we may ſleep quietly, when he ſhewes himſelf awake for us,

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who (indeed) *never slumbreth nor sleepeth.* And if God awake not for us, all our watchfulness is as useless to us as our sleepiness, *The watchmen waketh but in vain, except the Lord keep the City.* Except he awake our watching can do no good; and if he awake, good will come, though we be asleep. It is our duty to be careful, and it is our comfort that the care of God is enough for us. *The eye of divine providence helps us in many humane improvidences.* What their happiness is for whom God awakes, see in the next words,

He will make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

This is the second degree or step of mercy promised; when the Lord awakes, he will awake to purpose. We say of some men, *Early up and never the near*; they awake, and do little work: but if God awakes, see what he doth,

He will make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

Some of the *Rabbins* understand these words as a description of the soul; *the habitation of thy righteousness*, that is, *thy soul shall prosper*, because the soul is the proper seat of righteousness and holiness. Righteousness belongeth to the inward man, Righteousness being a spiritual thing, is housed and lodged in the spirit, that's the habitation of it.

Anima est justitiæ & omnium virtutum domicilium. Aben. Ezr.

There are others of the *Jews*, who take this *habitation of righteousness* for the body, because the body is the habitation of the soul, in which righteousness is seated, and so the *habitation of righteousness* by a second remove is the outward man. The Lord shall bless thy body, which now lieth in a woful plight, distempered and disfigured with sores and sicknesses.

But rather take the word *habitation* in those two ordinary Scripture-senses, either strictly for the place where *Job* dwelt; or more largely for all that belong unto him. The habitation of a man, is all his estate, and all that appertains to his estate; *He will make thy habitation*, that is, thy children, thy servants, thy fields, thy cattel, thy stock, thy all, to be prosperous.

The Chaldee Paraphrase readeth, *He will make thy beautiful place to be prosperous.* The word signifies *beauty* as well as an *habitation*, as was shewed, upon Chap. 5. ver. 3. thither I refer the Reader. Then, *habitation* is the seat of a mans outward estate, and his estate: the shell and the kernel, the outside and inside of all he hath.

נוה
Significat domum vel speciem, pulchritudinem justitiæ tuæ Tar.

The habitation of righteousness.

Quasi nihil aliud quam æquitatem & justitiam redoleant bona juste acquisita Merc.

That is, the habitation where righteousness doth flourish, or wherein thou livest righteously.

But what is righteousness?

Righteousness is a very comprehensive word. The Philosopher tells us, it takes in all other vertues whatsoever, *It is not a part of vertue, but all vertue.*

Δικαιοσυνὴ ἐστι μέρος ἀρετης, ἀλλα ὅλη ἀρετὴ. Arist. Ethic. l. 5. c. 1.

When righteousness is set as distinct from holiness and piety, then it is restrained to our dealings with men. *Righteousness relates to men, and holiness to God, Luk.* 1. 75. *Tit.* 2. 12. Gospel-grace, teaches us to live *soberly*, in opposition to the intemperance of our bodies: *righteously*, in opposition to wrong in our actions; *godly*, in opposition to all impiety and prophaneness of our minds.

But righteousness here takes in our whole duty, whether to God or man, *The habitation of thy righteousness*; that is, the place where thou exercisest all manner of holy and righteous duties toward God and toward man. Righteousness toward man, first, in distributive justice, giving every one his due in judgement, as thou art a Magistrate: Secondly, Righteousness towards man in commutative justice, giving every one his due in commerce, as thou art a neighbour.

The habitation of thy righteousness.

It is an ellegant expression. The Church is sometimes called so, *Jer.* 31. 23. *Thus saith the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, as yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah, and in the Cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity. The Lord bless thee O habitation of righteousness, and mountain of holiness.* This speech they shall use: It seems it had been an ordinary salutation thus to bespeak *Judah, O thou habitation of justice or righteousness, and mountain of holiness.* Every particular member of the Church is named, *A tree of righteousness*, Isa. 61. 3. *They shall be called trees of righteousness, the plantation of the Lord.* Each Saint is a tree of righteousness, and all of them together are an habitation, a plantation of righteousness.

God himself is stiled, *The habitation of righteousness*, because he (in a way of highest excellency, or in the most superlative degree) is the seat of righteousness; all righteousness is (as it were) housed,

housed, and dwelling in him. The Prophet (Jer. 50. 7.) describing the unkind usuage which the true worshipers should find in the dayes of which he propheſieth, speaks thus, *All that found them have devoured them, and their adversaries said, we offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord:* They thought their brethren had sinned against the Lord, and that therefore they might trouble them without sin; *They have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers.* It is but justice (say they) for us to punish those, who sin against the habitation of justice. *Men* (take it in passage) *do evil sometimes out of conscience, and think they do God good service, while they really wrong their brethren.*

שלם *Pacificabit, pacatum reddet, i. e. integrum, perfectum, omnibus bonis redundans, qualia affert pax.* ἀποκατασήσει δὲ σοι. Sept.

He shall make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.] That is, he shall make it peaceable and quiet, setled and established. The word signifies peace, plenty and prosperity. He shall pacifie or quiet the habitation of thy righteousness. The Septuagint thus, He shall restore it to, or repair it for thee.

There are three things in that word. It may note,

1. The quietness of all within his family. There shall be peace and a good agreement in thy habitation.

2. The abundance, the fruitfulness, the great encrease of all within his family, he will make thee thrive.

3. The peaceable holding or enjoyment of all those good things, free from forraign invasion or oppressions. Do thus, and then neither *Sabeans* nor *Chaldeans* shall any more come upon thee and plunder thee. Thus he will make the *habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.*

The sum of all is, as if *Bildad* had said unto *Job*: *Thy habitation hath heretofore been an habitation of unrighteousness, of impiety, of tyranny, thy house hath been filled with spoyl and oppression, thy Tabernacle hath been a Sanctuary for wickedness, a lodging or rendezvous for all manner of riot and intemperance, of rapine & injustice; but now, Job, if thou wilt make thy self pure and upright, thou shalt see the case will alter; whereas before troops and armies of miseries have invaded thee, and spoyled all thou hadst within and without; now, if in thy house, where wickedness formerly dwelt, righteousness shall enter and dwell, thou shalt see that with righteousness peace will enter too; troubles will depart, when wickedness departs, and evils of punishment will dislodge with the evil of sin; when those better guests, righteousness and holiness come into, and are welcom'd to house, then*

Ubi facta surrit morum & studiorum, fiet etiam magna fortunæ conversio.

then thy house shall be better; when thy heart, and thy life change thy estate shall change; and those comforts which have so long been strangers from thee shall return; thy banish'd mercies shall come home again, adorn thy walls, and strengthen thy family.

This is the sum of what he promiseth in these words, *He will make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.* Hence observe,

First, *Prosperity is in the power of God.*

If he awakes he can make us prosperous and peacefull. If he do but speak the word our captivity shall return. He saith to a dry stick, flourish, and to a green tree, wither: his word is cloathed with power to do good or evil.

Secondly, Observe, *A righteous habitation shall be a prosperous habitation.*

Whether we respect persons, families or nations, thus it is in the ordinary dispensations of God. As in regard of our spiritual and eternal estate, *The work of righteousness is peace* (Isa. 32. 17.) so, in regard of our temporal and outward. Christ who is the *Prince of righteousness*, is also the *Prince of Peace.* He brought righteousness into the world, and then peace came into the world. If he had not made an habitation of righteousness in the world, there had never been an habitation of peace in the world: in that work of his, the foundation of our prosperity was laid. Jesus Christ who as a Preist purchased our peace, is also, The *King of righteousness.* Blessings crown the head of a righteous people (Jer. 31. 23.) *They shall say, the Lord bless thee, O habitation of righteousness.* If thou art a habitation of righteousness, a blessing shall rest upon thee; *The Kingdome of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*, Rom. 14. 17. as the spiritual Kingdome of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost: So the joy and peace of worldly Kingdoms is not meat and drink, but righteousness. When Kingdomes are holy habitations, they will soon be quiet habitations. In Isa. 26. 2. *Open ye the gates that the righteous Nation which keepeth the truth may enter in; thou shalt keep him in perfect peace.* God will give and preserve the peace of the righteous. Righteousness is the pillar of a State, and the parent of peace. *The mountains* (Psal. 72. 3.) *shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.* Plant righteousness upon barren hills and Mountains, and peace will flourish there.

I

I might hence infer a corallary, by the rule of contraries, That *Unrighteousness makes unprosperous and unpeaceable habitations.* An habitation of idolatry and false worship, an habitation of cruelty and hard dealing, shall be an habitation for owls and shreech-owls, a dwelling place for every unclean bird and beast; these shall take up their lodging within such walls, and mak etheir nests in such chambers.

Whilst we are fil'd, as the Apostle characterizeth the Gentiles, (*Rom.* 1.) *with all unrighteousness*; it is no marvel if we are filled with all trouble. The Prophet *Malachi* brings in *Edom* thus reflecting upon himself (Chap. 1.4.) whereas *Edom* saith, *I am impoverished*, &c. *Edom* began to be sensible all was not well with him. Hereupon he advises upon a way to help himself, and concludes thus, *We will return and build the desolate places.* This was their resolve; but what saith God to it? Even this, will ye build, ye shall build, I will give you leave to build, *but I will throw it down again*, I will spoyl your work. Why would the Lord be thus severe? The next words give a reason, *They shall call thee, the border of wickedness, the people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever.* Wickedness is a large word, and takes in all unrighteousness towards man, as well as impiety towards God. *That building cannot stand long, where unrighteousness lies between the timber and the stones. God will pull down by night, what such men build by day.* If then we would have buildings stand, and our habitations prosperous, let us labour to build with justice, and make ours the habitations of righteousness. Look upon it in families, that which withers the comfort of a family, in children, in servants, is the unrighteousness found in a family; if there be unrighteousnes there, no wonder if there be decayes and discontents there too. If there be unrighteousness in Cities; *If* (Psal. 55. 11.) *deceit and guile go not out of our streets, no marvel, if complainings go not out of our streets.* We call for peace and prosperity, O that peace would come! but if our hearts were set upon this, if we laboured every one with himself, and every one with his brother, and every one with the publick to the uttermost of his line, that we may in our persons, in our families, in our policies, be an habitation of righteousness; how soon should we all be a prosperous habitation, an habitation of peace?

Two things make a Nation an habitation of righteousness.

First,

Firſt, When right is done ſpeedily.

Secondly, when right is done impartially.

Tedious delayes make Courts priſons of righteouſneſs, not habitations of righteouſneſs. Partial diſtributions ſhew a place to be a market of righteouſneſs (where he ſhall have it that bids moſt for it) not an habitation of righteouſneſs, where every one ought to have it that comes for it; *Ye ſhall do no unrighteouſneſs in judgement* (ſaith the Law, *Levit.* 19. 15.) how ſhall they avoid it? the next words give direction, *Thou ſhalt not reſpect the perſon of the poor, nor honour the perſon of the mighty.* Righteouſneſs takes not notice of the perſons of men, but of their cauſes. We muſt not do unrighteouſly in charity to the poor, as well as not in hopes or for gifts from the rich.

Again, The Hebrew ſignifies a beautiful habitation. Righteouſneſs loves to dwell in a fair houſe. It is ſo, when, firſt ſwept from bribes, theſe are filth in the houſe, and the corrupters of righteouſneſs.

Secondly, A beautiful houſe hath ſtore of lights in it. Juſtice and truth love not corners and cloſe cells. Juſtice muſt act clearly: men cannot bear it, that, what falls upon their ſenſes ſhould not be in the light of their underſtandings. God hath ſecret judgements, but man muſt not. One potſheard muſt ſhew another, why he forms or breaks him thus in judgement.

Laſtly, The beauty of the houſe of juſtice ariſes from good Laws, and good men to execute them. Righteouſneſs cannot act without a rule; and rules cannot act themſelves. Good Laws without good Magiſtrates never made any people a habitation of righteouſneſs. It is not good Laws, but good men which make a Kingdome happy. Now, as unrighteouſneſs makes a ſtrong people weak, a rich people poor, an honourable people baſe, a great eſtate to decreaſe, and come to nothing: So righteouſneſs makes a weak people ſtrong, a poor people rich, a mean people honourable, a little eſtate encreaſe and come to much. Thus *Bildad* aſſures *Job* with his next breath.

Verſe 7. *Though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhould greatly encreaſe.*

This is the third gradation. God will not only awake for thee, and make thee proſperous, but he will greatly encreaſe thee. Thou ſhalt not only be ſet in as good a condition as thou waſt, but in a far better.

Though

Though thy beginning were ſmall.

Though the head of thy eſtate (ſo the Hebrew) though the firſt of thy eſtate were ſmall. ראשית *A quo quid incipit.*

The word *ſmall*, notes a ſmalneſs either in quantity or in quality; and it is oppoſed to a double greatneſs (*Gen.*25. 3.) *Jacob* and *Eſau* are thus diſtinguiſhed, the one ſhall be *great*, the other *ſmall*, which we tranſlate, the *Elder ſhall ſerve the younger*; the greater ſhall ſerve the leſs.

Though thy beginning was ſmall.) The City that *Lot* deſired (*Gen.*19.) is called *Zoar*, from this word, *Is it not a little one?* Though thy eſtate were but a *Zoar*, a little one, yet it ſhall be built of a larger compaſs.

The Septuagint raiſes the ſenſe of the latter clauſe, *Though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhall be ineffable, ſuch as none ſhall be able to tell over or deſcribe.* Thy eſtate ſhall be beyond account. τὰ ἔρχατα σὺ ἀμύθητα, *Sept.*

A Queſtion ariſes how we are to make this compariſon between *Jobs beginning and latter end?* Whether we are to refer it to the eſtate he had before his affliction, compared with what he ſhould have after his affliction; or, whether we are to underſtand it of the augmentation and encreaſe of his eſtate after his affliction, which at the beginning ſhould be but ſmall, but afterwards ſhould receive a mighty augmentation. The ſenſe is good either way.

Firſt, If we underſtand it of his eſtate before and after his troubles compared together; Though thy beginning or the firſt eſtate which God gave thee were ſmall, yet thy latter end, or the eſtate which God will give thee, when theſe ſtorms are over-blown, ſhall wonderfully encreaſe.

Againſt this it may be objected, How can the former eſtate of *Job* be called *ſmall*, when as it is ſaid (*Chap.*1.) that *Job* had a very vaſt eſtate? We have heard the inventory of his goods, the total ſumme or apprizement of all, being given in by God himſelf, *That Job was the greateſt of all the men in the Eaſt.* How then can it be ſaid, that his firſt eſtate was ſmall? *Though thy beginning were ſmall.*

I anſwer, comparatively it may be called ſmall. An exceeding exceſs of greatneſs, leſſens and littles any other greatneſs. The Moon is a great light, but the light of the Sun makes that light darkneſs. That which is glorious hath no glory, by reaſon of the glory that excelleth; he that is rich or

great hath no riches or greatness, by reason of riches and greatness which excel. *Job* had a fair estate before, and was the greatest man of all the men of the East; but his estate is promised to be such as shall obscure the former, and render it inconsiderable. Accordingly, it is said, in the story of his restoring (Chap. 42. 10.) *That the Lord turned the captivity of* Job; *also the Lord gave* Job *twice as much as he had before.* Half is but a little to the whole. And at the 12. verse, *The Lord blessed the latter end of* Job *more then his beginning.* Which words are a good exposition upon the text in hand. When *Joseph* sent for his father and brethren to come into *Ægypt* (Gen. 45. 20.) he saith, but *as for your stuff, do not regard that, for the good of all the land of Ægypt is before you. Joseph* knew his Father was a rich man. *Jacob* was no beggar: but let all that go for nothing, leave it to those that will take it up, all the good of *Ægypt* is before you; what is all you have to the *riches of Ægypt?* That's the first sense.

Observe from it, That

The Lord is able to repair all our losses with abundant advantages.

We complain of losses; I have lost a great estate, saith one, but the Lord is able to give thee such an estate, as that the greatness of the former shall not be remembred.

Secondly, *They who lose much, usually have great repairs.*

Job was great above all others in the East, but now he shall be made greater then himself. As in spirituals, they that have, to them more shall be given, and they shall have more abundance; so they that lose much in temporals, to them more is given sometimes then they have lost, and they shall have abundance.

There is a second sense, to which the letter of the original doth rather incline, which makes both parts of the verse look only to his second estate, namely, his restauration: and so the sense is this, *Though thou doest not presently thrive and grow up to a great estate, yet afterward thou shalt*; Though after this breaking and undoing thou shouldst set up (as it were) but with a little stock, one friend bringing thee a peece of silver, another a peece of gold, a third a jewel, all making a purse for thee: and so thou beginnest but upon alms and charity, yet thy latter end shall greatly encrease. As if *Bildad* had said, Though God should now begin to comfort, and restore thee, but with small matters, yet do not think he will so conclude with thee, he hath enough in store. The letter of the original

riginal is most clear for this, the words being assertive, rather then suppositive, *Thy beginning shall be small, and thy latter end shall greatly encrease:* which refers to the time future, not past, as we and others translate.

Hence observe, That

The Lord doth usually raise his people by degrees.

They do not receive all at once. It is true of persons, families, and Nations. We must not look for all in a day. Outward mercies may come too fast upon us, there may be a glut of them. We may have more than we know how to order or take in, it may do hurt to receive all together. As it is with men that have been long pined with famine and hunger, and are grown out of their ordinary course, by reason of their necessitated abstinence: We do not presently give them all manner of good cheer, or bring them to a full table, and let them eat as much as they will; but we give them a little and a little at a time, and so by degrees bring their stomacks on, till they be wrought for plenty. So when the Lord brings persons or nations very low, he doth not bring in a glut of mercies at first, this would be more then they are able to bear; they may be undone, if they have all at one receit; but he gives as they are able to take them in, and make a right use of them. As *Jacob* said to *Esau* his brother, when he invited him to march with him; no, saith *Jacob*, I cannot march thy pace, I must consider what my train is, I have flocks here that are great with young, *And if I should over-drive them one day, they would all die: therefore* (saith he) *I will lead on softly, according as the cattel that are before me, and the children be able to endure.* So it is in this case, the Lord in infinite wisdome gives, as men are able to receive. *We may be over-mercy'd, as well as over-afflicted; over-laden with comforts, as well as with sorrows.* And therefore as the Lord doth correct in judgement and in measure: so also doth he restore. We have not full-tide in a moment, or in a quarter of an hour: it would be terrible, dangerous and troublesome, if when it is low water we should have full tide in a moment; but it comes in stealing by degrees, and at last it swels all over the banks. Such a stealing flood of mercies the Lord gives his people.

Therefore be caution'd. In the returns of mercy do not despise small things. Your beginnings may be inconsiderable, this is but a little, and that is but a little, but do not despise the first

Cum dicat, erit, satis indicat se loqui de iis bonis, quæ habiturus est, si resipuerit, non de iis quæ habuit, ante hanc tempestatem. Drus. *Sic solet Deus ditare suos, non uno tempore simul, sed paulatim: & ut Itali dicunt, poco à poco, Galli, peu à peu.* Idem.

or second little. So the Prophet counsels (*Zech.* 4.10.) *Despise not the day of small things:* The beginnings of mercy were scarce discernable, and they looked upon them as nothing, they thought they would never come to any thing. Take heed (saith the Prophet) do not despise small things, there's more a coming. Hast thou but a little? Doth God make but some little repairs of outward comforts? Do not sleight these, look upon them as the beginnings of greater things. When *Elijah* sent his servant to go and look toward the Sea whether he saw any sign of rain, he at last brought him word that he saw a little cloud arise out of the Sea, as big as a mans hand: would any one think that a prognostick of great rain? *Elijahs* servant might despise this, and say this is no sign of rain; but *Elijah* knew better, that little assured him there was a mighty showr at hand, he knew how it would work presently: Go, bid *Ahab* prepare his Chariot, and get him down, that the rain stop him not. Thus it is, respecting daily providences; if you see a mercy coming but as big as a mans hand, be perswaded that the Lord sends it as a forerunner, as that which shall usher in large and extensive mercies. If we see the glimmering light of day break, we are not angry, because it is not presently high noon, or, because we have not full light, we know the light will come by degrees; *Thy beginning shall be small, but thy latter end shall greatly encrease.*

CHAP.

JOB, Chap. 8. Verſ. 8, 9, 10.

For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thy ſelf to the ſearch of their fathers.
(For we are but of yeſterday, and know nothing; our dayes upon earth are a ſhadow)
Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?

WE have opened the firſt argument, by which *Bildad* confirms his propoſition laid down at the third verſe, *That God is juſt*; both from the example of Gods dealing with *Jobs* children, *verſ.* 4. and from what God was ready to do for him, in the 5, 6, and 7. *verſes.*

The context now read contains a ſecond general argument to prove the former aſſertion, and it is grounded upon the teſtimony or authority of the Ancients; as if *Bildad* had ſaid thus, *I will not preſs thee with my own bare ſentence, and ſay-ſo, with my own reaſon and authority, but I wiſh thee to ſearch the records of former times, to conſult the wiſeſt and the holieſt men that ever were in the world, and let them judge in this caſe. Enquire of the former age, and prepare thy ſelf to the ſearch of their fathers.*

It is here obſervable that *Bildad* manages his counſel by the ſame arguments which *Eliphaz* had uſed before him: *Eliphaz* bid *Job* (*Enquire who ever periſhed being innocent*, Chap.4.) and promiſes him peace upon repentance (*Chap.*5.23,24.) *Bildad* runs the ſame ſtrain, *If thou wert pure*, &c. and here, *Enquire of the former age*, &c.

The ſtrength of his argument may be caſt into this forme.

That is true which the holieſt and wiſeſt in all antiquity with one mouth and one conſent agree in.

But the holieſt and wiſeſt in all antiquity agree in this, that God is juſt.

Therefore this is a truth.

Hereupon he inferreth, that God had dealt juſtly with *Job* in conſuming his eſtate, in deſtroying his children, and in afflicting his perſon. That's the logical meaning or argument of theſe three verſes.

Enquire

Enquire I pray thee.

The word notes a very earnest, and a diligent search or enquiry: To enquire with industry, yea, with importunity. The *grave* hath it's name in Hebrew from this word, and so hath Hell; because the grave (as it were) calls for, or enquires after all flesh; and Hell with much earnestness gapes for wicked men, *Eccl.* 2.10. *Whatsoever mine eyes desired.* The eye is a strong asker.

שאל *Significat petere, postulare & quidem cum precibus. Etiam scisciteri in dubiis.*

It is applied sometimes to persons, and then it signifies, to enquire or consult what is to be done. Sometimes it is applied to things, and then it signifies, to ask that a thing may be done. Prayer is an enquiry after God, and the things of God, 1*Sam.*1.17,20, 27. This word is used about *Hannah*'s prayer to God for a child, *Hannah conceived and bare a Son, and called his name Samuel*, saying, *Because I have asked him of the Lord.*

De persona, sic consulere: de rebus sic petere. Merc.

Further, The word is applied to God, when he enquires after, or asks somewhat of us, as if he made his request and sute to us, (*Deut.*10.12.) *And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee?* Or, what doth he enquire after in thee? It is this, *To fear the Lord thy God*, &c.

Here, *to enquire*, is to use all endeavours and means to find out the best informations and resolutions, which the fathers in those former ages were able to give *Job* in the controversie then a foot between him and his friends, *Enquire, I pray thee*,

Of the former age.

By the former, we are not to understand those that were immediately preceding only, or those that were preceding for some few generations past, but as the Septuagint well renders it, by former generations, we may understand *the first generation*; begin at the first, and so come down all along, begin as high as thou canst. Enquire not only of those who lived since the floud, but of all who have been since God created man upon the earth; draw the line of thy search thorow all ages, and thou shalt find the pedegree of this truth from age to age, from generation to generation. *Enquire, I pray thee, of the former*

γενεὰν πρώτην.

דור *à radice.* דור *Continuè & successivè vixit, duravit: sensu & sono idem quod vox latina Duro.*

Age.

This word Age, is taken three wayes.

1. For the whole space of mans life; which, when it is doubled, signifies

ſignifies a very long life, *Pſal.* 61.7. *Thou ſhalt prolong the Kings life* (or, according to the letter of the Hebrew, thou ſhalt adde dayes to the dayes of the King) *and his years as many generations*; or, as generation and generation, age and age: long and long, that is, very long; Two lives, or two mens ages, being (as it were) laid into one.

2. For ſome ſpecial part of mans life. Mans life is divided into ſeveral ages. Some divide it into four, alluding to the four parts of the year. Some, into five, infancy, childehood, youth, manseſtate, and old-age; comparing them to the five acts of an interlude, the Prologue whereof is infancy, and the Epilogue decrepid old-age. Others into ſeven, in alluſion to the ſeven Planets.

3. It is taken for an age of men, or the ſtate of the time preſent. So in the Goſpel, Chriſt calleth the Scribes and Phariſees, *A generation of vipers*, *and an adulterous generation.* As if he had ſaid; You of this time and age of the world, are a viperous and an adulterous brood. So *Pſal.* 14.5. *God is in the generation of the righteous*: That is, he favours that generation, or ſort of men; God is in all generations, but ſuch he delights in moſt; the wicked have cauſe enough to fear thoſe, in whom God delights.

That of the Prophet (which text hath variety of interpretations) is taken in this ſenſe (*Iſa.* 53.8.) *Who ſhall declare his generation?* It is the word of the text, *Who ſhall declare his age, or the generation of Chriſt?* Some underſtand it of his eternal generation. Others of his temporal generation, when he was incarnate, the miſtery whereof was beyond words. A third, of that eternity which followed his paſſion. As if it were an Antitheſis to thoſe words, *He was taken from priſon, and he was cut off, but who ſhall declare his generation?* You may quickly write up the dayes that Chriſt lived here upon earth, they were but few, even *his pilgrimage* was ſhort on earth, but who can declare his generation? Thoſe infinite and eternal ages and revolutions, thorow which he ſhall paſs, though now you have quickly cut off his life: Others, by his *generation* underſtand the holy ſeed and iſſue, the children of Chriſt. His Croſs was fruitful, and his ſufferings productive of an infinite generation, *Who can declare it?* Though you cut off the Father, yet this father by dying will give life to an innumerable poſterity, *Who can declare his generation?* So (verſ. 10.) *He ſhall ſee his ſeed.* But beſides all theſe we may with good probability interpret

Ætatem vocant Hebræi genus hominum ſimul viventium, ſic ætas prava, adultera.

Apud Græcos γένεα ſignificat intervallum ſeptem annorum, unde medici vetant duas ætates habenti, i.e. annos quatuor decim nato venam incidi, quod ſanguine egeat. Suidas.

pret the word *generation* for the time when Christ sojourned in the flesh, *Who can declare his generation?* That is, who can describe the time or the age wherein Christ lived? As if he had said, you see here in this glass of prophecy how they will use Christ, how bloudily and cruelly they will deal with him, he shall be imprisoned, he shall be cut off and numbred among transgressours, *Who can declare his generation?* What pen is able with lively colours to paint out the several wickednesses and tyrannies of that age, acted against, and inflicted upon that holy and innocent lamb *Jesus Christ*, who came to die for the sins of the world? Surely his generation, or the story of his age will be such, as no pen is to able draw out, or fully to delineate, *Who shall declare his age?*

Quis cogitare aut dicere potest, quam perversi fuerint homines, qui tempore ejus victuri sint. Pined.

The age which *Bildad* calls *Job* to enquire into, is not a part of mans life, or the whole life of a man, or one age of men, or state of times, but the whole space of time from the very beginning, with all things done or suffered, and the persons who have been active or passive, doers or sufferers in those times. *Thus enquire of the former age.*

The reason why he called him to enquire of the former age, was, because in those times the will of God was not reduced to writing. The divinity of the first ages was traditional; The Scriptures were not composed for more than 2000 years after the creation, but the mind of God was either immediatly revealed, or carried from father to son, from generation to generation; being preserved, not in paper and ink, or other formal records, but in the memories and hearts of the faithful, until the giving of the Law. Hence it was that *Bildad* refers *Job* to those revelations, or to the experiences of the fathers concerning the dealings of God in former ages.

Columnæ duæ inscriptæ à nepotibus Adami, characteres quosdam & figuras mathematicas, prosidorum observatione potius quam ullam hujus iam, aut exquisitam de Deo & ejus providentia doctrinam habuisse dicuntur. Beros. l. 8. *Ant.*

Beroſus in his eighth book of Antiquities, reports that the fathers after *Adam* set up two great pillars, upon which, some affirm they inscribed many divine truths: but he tells us that those pillars (of which some monuments were seen after the floud) were filled rather with Astronomical observations, Mathematical scheams of the heavens and figures of stars; we cannot put much value upon either of these opinions. The former cannot warrant us that any thing was registred and written by Gods appointment, till the writing of the Law. And therefore *Bildad*, according to the usage of those times, sends *Job* for information to the traditions and reports of the fathers. For after the Law was written, the Prophets, in case of emergent doubts and controversies, sent the people

ple, not to the traditions or experiences of former ages, but, *To the Law and to the Teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light, or no morning in them*, Iſa.8.20. The word once written was the rule, and though it cannot ſpeak, yet it muſt teach us how to ſpeak. If we ſpeak not according to this, there is no light in us. But the word not being written, *Bildad* adviſes *Job* well, *Enquire of the former age*,

And prepare thy ſelf to the ſearch of their fathers.

כון
Fundare, aptare, parare, ordinare, ſtabilire ſignificat.

Having counſel'd him to *enquire of the former age*; he addeth, *Prepare thy ſelf to the ſearch of their fathers*; as if he had ſaid, though I bid thee enquire, yet I would not have thee ruſh hand over head upon this enquiry, *Prepare thy ſelf*. The word ſignifies to lay a good foundation; *Due preparations are the foundations of action*. Hence it ſignifies alſo to eſtabliſh; becauſe a matter is eſtabliſhed and confirmed by wiſe preparations, and conſiderate addreſſes to it. Thoſe things ſtand faſteſt about which we make not too much haſte. Further, the word ſignifies the fixing of the mind, *Fix thy heart upon this work*; keep thy ſpirits intent (*Pſal.* 108. 1.) *My heart is fixed* (ſaith *David*, which ſome render, *My heart is prepared*) *I will ſing and give praiſe. Prepare thy ſelf*

To the ſearch of their Fathers.

Before he adviſed him to enquire of the former age, here, *To ſearch their fathers*; as if he had ſaid, do not confine thy ſelf to the immediately fore-paſſed times, but go as high as thou canſt: The former age (as was touched upon that paſſage) may include all times paſt: but here to avoid all miſtakes, he gives it in expreſly. The fathers of the former age, are the fathers of every age. All that have lived before us, come under the relation of our fathers. The fathers were dead, but they lived in their monuments and works: theſe he muſt ſearch, ſo far as any mark or remembrance of them could be found. Hence obſerve,

Firſt, *That as it is a duty in all, ſo it was a cuſtome in ancient times, carefully to record the dealings of God with them, for the uſe of enſuing generations.*

To what end ſhould *Job* ſearch, if nothing were to be found; The Jewes were commanded to remember the works of God for their learning after the word was written, *Pſal.* 78.5. He eſtabliſhed a teſtimony in *Jacob*, &c. *That they ſhould make them known*

to their Children. God hath always had a book of his acts and monuments, as well as of his laws and institutions. Names given to children and yearly feasts, to stones and pillars, have been the preservatives and memorials of his wonderful works. The works of God are his Holiness, Justice, Power, Mercy, Truth made visible. The administrations of God in one age, are for the instruction of all ages. God spake with *Jacob* only in person at *Bethel*, yet there the Scripture saith he spake with all his prosperity, *Hos.* 12. 4. *He found him in* Bethel, *and there he spake with us.* It is then a debt to posterity, to shew them what God hath done for us. Observe,

Secondly, *That it is our duty to enquire into the dealings of God in all ages.*

It was their duty before the word was written, and it is a duty still. The works of God are to be studied and read over as well as his word, *Deut.* 4. 20. & 32. *Ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon earth; and ask from one side of heaven to another, enquire every way to see whether ever God dealt with a people, as he hath dealt with thee, whether God did ever assay to take to himself a Nation from the midst of another Nation by temptations, and by signs, and by wonders, &c.* Enquire this of all the former times. So, *Deut.* 32. 7. *Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations, ask thy father and he will shew thee, thy Elders, and they will tell thee.* The Psalmist promises to rehearse what these were enjoyned to record, *Psal.* 78. 3, 4. *I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.* Our speaking of, and enquiring into, what God hath done, shews the harmony between his word and works. And the former providences of God are food for our faith, as well as the promises of God.

Thirdly, That which I shall rather insist upon, is this,

True antiquity ever gives a testimony to the truth.

Hence the Prophets send the people back to antiquity, *Jer.* 6. 16. *Enquire for the good old-way.* Every old way is not a good way, but in every good old way we may walk safely and see the footsteps of truth. It is a received rule, *That is truest which is ancientest.* It is certainly so, for truth is not only ancient, but eternal. Truth is as old as God himself, for Truth is nothing else but the mind of God, truth was with God from everlasting. Truth is commonly

Quod antiquissimum verissimum.

monly called the daughter of time, yet (in a ſenſe) it is the mother of time, for it was before time was; and therefore (no queſtion) that which is ancienteſt is trueſt.

Yet there is a great abuſe of this principle. Look back to antiquity, and conſult with your fathers (ſay many) and ſee what they did, how they believed. But what is the antiquity they call us to conſult with? It is not (as *Moſes* ſpake in that place of *Deuteronomy*) antiquity, *ſince God created man upon earth*, or ſince Jeſus Chriſt was upon the earth, and gave out his Goſpel-laws; but it is the antiquity of ſome later ages and editions, an antiquity far ſhort of what is indeed the ancient time. The Apoſtle (1 *Joh.* 2.7.) gives us the definition of an old commandment, *This is the old commandment which was from the beginning*. Our ſinful nature is called the *old man*, and yet it is a *corrupt man*. It is called the *old man*, not that it is older then the *new man*; the *new man* is not of a younger houſe, or later date then the *old man*. Holineſs was before corruption. And the Image of God upon man, elder then ſin, the image of the devil. There are many corruptions in doctrine, in opinion, in worſhip, in practice, which go for very old: And there are many doctrines which we call *new truths*; is it becauſe thoſe corruptions are older then the new truths? No, new truths are elder then the oldeſt corruptions. That which we call the *new world*, was created in the beginning, though diſcovered but yeſterday. So new truths were given from the beginning, only they were unknown till of late; and we may well conceive that ſome goodly Regions of truth are ſtill (*terra incognita*) undiſcovered; God having reſerved them for the honour, and induſtry of ſome *divine Columbus*, who may give us an exacter ſea-card of divine myſteries, then the world hath yet ſeen, though enough hath been ſeen from the beginning for the ſafe ſteering of our courſe to heaven. He that would enquire and make a diligent ſearch for truth, muſt go to the firſt inſtitutions, *That's the old commandment which was from the beginning*. The Prophet *Ezekiel* (Chap. 23. 43.) ſpeaks of ſome who were *grown old in adulteries*; that is, old in adulterating and corrupting the truth, and worſhip of God, *That which is old may be old in evil, and fuller of errours then it is of days*. We find when the good Kings of *Judah* reformed, they did not ſearch only into what was done in the ages immediately before them, or what their next fathers had done; but they ſearcht what was done in the times of their godly fathers, how many removes ſoever diſtant from them.

Hezekiah (2 *Chr.* 29. 6.) tells the *Levites* that their fathers were in an errour, that they had trespassed, and done that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and had forsaken him; and *Chap.* 30. 5. speaking of the observation of the Passeover, he saith, *They had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written*; therefore *v.* 7. he dehorteth them, saying, *Be not ye like your fathers which trespassed against the Lord God of your fathers*; he doth not mean that they should not be like their first fathers, who had the truth purely committed to them, and so worshipped God purely; but be not like your immediate fore-fathers, or your corrupt fore-fathers, how many descents and generations so ever ye can number from them. And this was a thing so strange, that when *Hezekiah* sent the Posts from City to City thorow the Countries of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* with this message, that he would have a reformation according to the first institution or pattern, and would not have them stay in what their fore-fathers had done; it is said, *vers.* 10. *That they laughed the messengers to scorn, and they mocked them*, what must we now be wiser then our fathers? Yes, saith he, you have done evil a long time, you and your fathers, therefore I must bring you back to your first fathers, in comparison of whom, the fathers you claim by were but children, and those degenerate children. It is said of *Josiah*'s reformation (2 *King.* 23. 22.) That *there was not the like from the dayes of the Judges, nor in all the dayes of the Kings of Israel and Judah*; he went to the very beginning of all, there had not been such a thing done before. So that if any should have objected, why may not such a reformation serve us as served those Kings and Judges? No, saith *Josiah*, I will search what was beyond their time, into the remotest antiquities. The Church makes humble confession (*Psal.* 106. 6.) *We have erred with our fathers*; let not any turn this into a stubborn resolution, and say, *we will err with their fathers*: if that be an errour which our fathers believed and practised, we will err with them. So those rebellious Jews pleaded (*Jer.* 44. 17.) *We will do as our fathers*. They who will do as their fathers, may suffer with their fathers; they who will needs err by their fathers copy, may go to hell too by their fathers copy. *Jerome* once desired leave of *Austin* to err with seven fathers whom he found of his opinion; I should not desire that leave, nor envy any one the priviledge: The Fathers are but children, when they erre; and they who will erre with their fathers, are worse then children.

Consider

Conſider then to what antiquity and to what fathers you appeal. Many practices are very old, yet very erroneous. Many old ſayings and old doings, muſt be unſaid and undone, or we ſhall be undone for ever. How many old ſayings of the Jews doth Chriſt gain-ſay (*Mat.* 5.) *Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid by them of old time*, thus and thus, *But I ſay unto you*, &c. And (*Mat.* 19.) anſwering the queſtion about Divorce, *Moſes indeed for the hardneſs of your hearts, ſuffered you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not ſo.* Beſides, ſome (like the *Gibeonites*) feign antiquity, they can put a gray beard upon a green head; and their opinions will be found fennowed and mouldy with errour, not with age. As we muſt take heed of novelties; ſo we muſt be cautious about antiquities. Some antiquities of old men are no better *than old wives fables*, of which the Apoſtle bids us beware; unlearned old wives fables are as authentick as many learned mens antiquities pleaded for. To have an itch after novelties, and to dote upon antiquities, are alike vain and dangerous. Old fables and young fancies are with me at the ſame rate. *No man having drunk old wine* (ſaith Chriſt, *Luk.* 5.35.) *ſtrait way calls for new, for he ſaith the old is better.* Old is better then new, if it be as good as new. But any new truth is better then the oldeſt errour; and every errour, the elder it is, the worſer it is.

Again, *Bildad* adviſes *Job* to prepare himſelf to the ſearch of his fathers. Hence obſerve,

We muſt not preſume to find truth with eaſe, or to come ſleightly by it.

Prepare thy ſelf (Prov. 2.3.) *If thou cryeſt after knowledge, and lifteſt up thy voice for underſtanding: if thou dig for it as ſilver, and ſearch for it as for hid treaſures, then thou ſhalt find, &c.* A man that will find ſilver, muſt prepare and fit himſelf to ſearch for ſilver. That lies not upon the ſurface, but in the boſome and bowels of the earth. There are four things wherein this preparation conſiſts.

1. Humility: God doth not teach but reſiſt the proud, he gives more grace (Humility is much Grace) to the humble. A lowly minded man ſhall know the mind of the moſt high God.

2. Holineſs ſubmitting to, and practiſing the truth we know, prepares us for the receiving of more truth. He that doth the will of Chriſt ſhall know his doctrine, *Joh.* 7. 17.

3. Prayer: *Doth any man want wiſdom, let him ask of God*, Jam. 1. 5. Truth is the daughter of God, and he will not beſtow her in

in marriage upon our minds, unless we ask him.

4. Love unto truth. *Truth is a beauty, and deserves our love*; to love truth is not a civility, but a duty: to search for truth without love to truth, is a dishonour to truth; and as the not receiving the love of the truth, is the cause why many apostatize and fall from it, so it is a reason why many are still ignorant and cannot come at it. As God, the Father of truth, must be askt his good will before we can have her: So truth the daughter of God shall be loved before we have her.

Bildad having thus advised *Job* to search antiquity, giveth him a reason of his advice, a modest reason, reflecting upon himself and upon his friends.

Vers. 9. *For we are but of yesterday and know nothing, our dayes on earth are a shadow.*

As if he had said, the reason why we refer thee to the former ages, is, because we are able to say so little of our selves and from our own experience, *we are but of yesterday*, that is, the time we have lived is very little, our days have been few upon earth. Truth is the daughter of time, and we are scarce sons of time, *we are but of yesterday*.

חמל

Heri dicitur de die præterito, tam de propinquo, quam de longinquo, quasi diceres antea. Rab Dav. *Apostolus Hebraizans, sic utitur vocabulo,* χθὲς. Heb. 13. 8.

Yesterday] Taken in our common speech, signifies only the day immediately going before. 2. It is put for the time a little before, and is as much as *lately*, 2 King. 9. 26. *Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of* Naboth, *and the blood of his Sons*: That is, it is not long since *Naboth* and his sons were slain, and their blood is as fresh in my memory, as if it were in my eye. 3. It is put for all time, how long so ever past (*Heb.* 13. 8.) the Apostle Hebraizing, saith, *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to day, and for ever*; yesterday is not put for the day immediately before, or for many days before, but for all days before, even from the beginning of the world; yea, not only are all days past included in yesterday, but the eternity, which is past.

Heri & nudius tertius, dum simul junguntur, proverbialem confici vel hyperbolem, tempus nuper actũ significantem. Sic etiam apud

Yesterday and the day before, are often translated *before* or heretofore, *Gen.* 31. 2, 5. *Exod.* 40. 10. *Ruth* 2 11. 2 *Sam.* 5. 2. noting time not much past, the present.

In this place by *yesterday*, we are not to understand all time past, nor the time immediately past, but small time past; *we are but of yesterday*, that is, we have lived but a while in the world (yet they were old men) the days which we have seen are as nothing, he expresses

presses their lives by the least compleat time past, to shew that they had lived but a little time past.

Græcos χθὲς καὶ πρώην. Bold.

So, in Scripture, this phrase, *to morrow* (opposite to yesterday) signifies not only the day immediately to come, but any time to come indefinitely (1 *Sam.*28.29.) the devil answers *Saul*, *To morrow thou and thy Sons shall be with me*; he did not know exactly and precisely that it should be the very next day, but he useth a word which would save his credit, if it should have fallen out many dayes or some years after. *To morrow* may be any time to come. As then *to morrow* signifies the immediate day coming, or all time to come, so *yesterday* signifies the immediate day past, or all time past. Thus one of the Ancients speaks of *Matthew*, *Yesterday a Publican, to day a Preacher*: that is, he was heretofore a Publican, and now a Preacher.

χθὲς usurpatur indefinitè de tempore præterito ut cras de futuro. Drus.

ὁ χθὲς τελώνης καὶ σήμερον εὐαγγελιστής. *Sensus est antea nunc.* Nazianz. de Mat.

For we are but as Yesterday.

Bildad stileth himself and his friends *yesterday*, to shew they had been but short-liv'd, though they had liv'd long. Some have given us the date of their years, or an account how old they were. They reckon *Bildad* an hundred and forty, *Eliphaz* an hundred and fifty, and *Zophar* an hundred and twenty years old. In what records the years of their nativities were found, I know not: but probable enough it is, that they were ancient men; And (*Chap.*15.10.) *Eliphaz* speaks as much, *with us are both the gray-headed and very ancient men, much elder then thy father.* Yet *Bildad* calleth himself and them, but as of yesterday, either absolutely, because the life of man is short, or comparatively to the lives of the fathers in the first age of the world, who lived much longer. His meaning then is, we will not bound thee to our experiences, who have lived but a while, but enform thy self from them who lived many years ago, and lived many years, some of them nine hundred years and more; enquire of *Methuselah*, and his contemporaries, who are able to give thee a better account then we. Therefore he addeth,

Hesterni, quasi unius diei homines sunt, novi & recentes.

And know nothing.

The particle [*And*] is here causal, *We are but of yesterday, therefore we know nothing*; in which sense we read it often. Take an instance (*Ezek.* 23.31.) *Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister, therefore I will give her cup into thine hand*: The Hebrew is, *And I will give her cup into thy hand, thou shalt pledge her in the same cup*

of

of affliction. So here, *We are but of yesterday and know nothing*; that is, *We are but of yesterday, therefore we know nothing.*

Know nothing.

The negation is not absolute, but comparative. *We know nothing*, that is, we neotericks know but little in comparison of those who lived long ago, and lived so long, even many centuries, gathering knowledge, and making up their observations: for (*Chap.* 12.12.) *With the ancient is wisdome, and in length of dayes understanding.* Hence observe,

The short life of man is not sufficient to gain much knowledge.

We are but of yesterday, and we know nothing, we cannot know much who live but little. The great Physitian complained long ago, *Life is short, and art is long*, natural life is not long enough for the journey of natural knowledge. How much less is it for divine knowledge, in the mystery of Christ: which is the art of all arts, and science of sciences. Those mysteries are very long, and our lives are very short, therefore at our best, we come short in the knowledge of them. Hence the Apostle (1 *Cor.* 13.) speaking of the most perfect knowledge we have in this life, concludes, *we know but in part*; there is a vast ocean of truths in the Gospel, but we are straight-necked vessels, we take in truth but by drops; we are long a taking it in, and we have not long to take it in; hence the emptiness of those who are fullest. He that hath much to learn, and but a little to live, cannot learn much. And as our time is little, so we lose a great deal of our time. Our losses of the time we have, hinder more then our having but little time. Our dayes are few, but if we could number them, we should apply our selves to, and gain to our selves a sufficient stock of holy wisdome. *The greatest reason why we profit no more in knowledge, is, because we improve our time no more*, though that be a reason also, because we have no more time.

Ars longa, vita brevis. Hipp.

Non parum temporis habemus, sed multum perdimus. Sen.

Secondly, observe, how modestly *Bildad* speaks of himself, and of his friends, *We are but of yesterday, and we know nothing.*

It becometh us to have humble thoughts of our own knowledge, how much soever we know.

These were neither children nor fools, who had to do with *Job*, they were the wisest of that age, *Oracles of wisdom, yet we know nothing*, saith *Bildad.* The best of our knowledge here, is to know our imperfections; it is as much knowledge as we can reach, to know

know wherein our knowledge consteth short. The Apostle (1 Cor. 8. 2.) is direct, *He that thinketh he knoweth any thing knoweth nothing as he ought to know*: He would not have us think that we know any thing: Though he had said in the former verse, *We know* that *we have all knowledge*, the Apostle *knew it*, but he would not have them *think it*. His meaning is, I grant there is knowledge abroad in the world, I have some, and you have some. We know what that we have all knowledge: which yet some understand, as if he spake in a secret irony, against those who brag'd so much of their knowledg, Yea, *We know you have all knowledge, but let me tell you thus much, you who stand so much upon your knowledge, he that thinketh he knoweth any thing, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know*. How can that be? Is not a man to think that he knowes what he knows? Must a man think himself ignorant, or otherwise he must be accounted ignorant? Surely no. There are very many that know much, and they may think that they may know something, yea, that they know many things. But observe the word there, *He that thinketh*: the word doth not signifie a simple apprehension of a thing, or a bare and naked knowledge, for so a man may reflect upon his own knowledge, and *know that he knows as well as what he knows*: but imports *thinking*, with a kind of insolency and pride of spirit, with affectation, boasting and vain glory in that knowledge. *He that thinketh he knowes any thing*, that is, he that vaunts and stands upon his knowledge, who conceits he hath so much knowledge, such a head-peice that he can carry all before him by the strength of his wit and parts, such a knowing man *knowes nothing*. *That mans wisdome is but a conceit who is wise in his own conceit*. In this sense we have the word (*Mat.* 3. 9.) where the Baptist bespeaks the Pharisees, *Think not to say within your selves, we have Abraham to our father*; *think not*, it was not a sin for them to think that *Abraham* was their father, and that they were descended from him, but *think not*, that is, do not think of this, and so be proud of it. Be not lifted up upon an outward priviledge, which will stand you in no stead at all, if you stand upon it: *Except you be changed and born again of the Spirit, it will not avail you that you are born of Abrahams flesh: If Abrahams faith be not in your hearts, it shall be no advantage to you that Abrahams blood runs in your veins*. The word is so used again (Phil. 3. 4.) *If any one thinketh he may be confident, I much more*: If any one may have an opinion of himself in regard of outward priviledges, surely I may,

ὁ δὲ πᾶς ὁ δὲ: geminatio negantis particulæ vehementius nega, Bez.

δοκεῖ non significat simplicem aliquam persuasionem, sed quæ cum superbia & insolentia conjuncta est, alioquin nihil magis repugnat fidei, quam Academica dubitatio Bez.

may, but I will not. So then an opinion or a conceitedness of our knowledge blasts all our knowledge, such a man *knoweth nothing as he ought to know*; he knoweth somewhat by *rote*, but he doth not know any thing (as a Christian ought) *by heart*. By how much we have the more true knowledge of the highest objects, by so much we have the lower thoughts of our knowledge. *It is best to know as much as we can of the best things, and to think as little as we can of our selves.*

Our dayes upon earth are a shaddow.

But were not the dayes of all the fathers a shaddow? Yes, the longest life is but a long shadow; he means comparatively, our lives are shorter by much then theirs were, and therefore but a shadow.

There are three sorts of shadows. 1. Natural. 2. Civil. 3. Spiritual.

First, A natural shadow is a dark light caused by the coming of some thick body between us and the Sun. This is a shadow in a proper and strict acception.

Secondly, Besides the natural, there is a civil shadow, *Protection is a shadow*: And to be under a shadow, is to be protected. We translate (*Num.* 14. 9.) *Their defence is departed from them*, the Hebrew is, *Their shadow*. So *Isa.* 4.5. and 25. 4.

Thirdly, A shadow is taken for a dark or imperfect representation of things spiritual; so all the Ceremonies of the old Law are called shadows (*Heb.* 8.5. & 10. 1. & 9. 9. *Col.* 2. 17.) Ceremonial worship is expressed by a shadow; because it was an obscure representation of the truth: The Ceremonies were interposed between Christ the true light and us, and so cast a shadow of him. Or, as a Painter, who is to draw the lively figure or shape of a man, at first makes an abscure draught, or some imperfect lines of the body, but afterwards gives it beauty and lustre to the life. The Mosaical rites were such a shadow of heavenly things. Yet further, a shadow (which comes neareſt the meaning of this text) notes the least imaginable sign or semblance of a thing: So (*Jam.* 1. 17.) when the Apostle saith, That with God the Father of lights, *there is not so much as a shadow of turning*, he means, there is not the least sign or token of turn with God.

When *Bildad* saith, *Our dayes upon earth are but as a shadow*, we may understand it, either of the time past, and so our life is but

a

a shadow that is gone. Or, it may be meant of the whole life of man taken together. The life of man (take it from the beginning to the ending, from the *Alpha* to the *Omega*, from the first to the last of it) is a shadow. The comparison is frequent in Scripture, I shall not need to stay upon it. See two or three particulars of the resemblance.

1. The life of man is a shadow, because it hath little in it that is substantial, a shadow is opposed to a substance; our life rather seems to be, then is, it is so quickly gone.

Umbra est quid mane, & nihil habens solidæ substantiæ

2. A shadow (though sometimes it be put for protection and safety, yet) implies unsetledness and uncertainty; if a man stands or rests under a shadow, the shadow will leave him, 'twill be gone from him, and betray him to the scorching Sun-beams; a shadow never keeps long in one place, but varies with the motion of the Sun, and when it is high noon the shadow goes quite up, and is not. There is such an uncertainty in the life of man, it holds not one tenour, it stayes not in any state, there is a deceitfulness in it, changes are upon it. The greatest certainty of our lives, is, that they are uncertain.

Umbra denotat malefidam stationem & protectionem ficcem, nam qui sub umbra dormit proditur statim, atq; traditur radiis solis. Pined.

In general, the life of man being compared to a shadow, teacheth us, that it is short, moveable and unconstant, there is no hold or tack in it, Psal. 102. 11. *My dayes are like a shadow that declineth.* The encrease of our dayes hath a declension in it, 1 Chron. 29. 15. *We are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our dayes on the earth are as the shadow.* How doth he explain that? *There is none abiding in our dayes, as there is no abiding in a shadow* Many of the Ancients have represented the life of man, not only as a shadow, but less then a shadow, *A dream of a shadow, a shadow of a shadow, an Idol of a shadow*, which is the lowest expression that can be, as much as to say, a nothing of nothing. *An Idol is nothing in the world.* God made no such thing in the world. And though our dayes be made by God in the world, yet they are no such thing as God made, or as the world makes them. We have met with points about the shortness and transitoriness of mans life often in this book, I shall therefore only add a word here.

Homo. vocatur σκιᾶς ὄναρ. Pindari σκιᾶς σκιά. Soph. εἴδωλον σκιᾶς.

It is our wisdom, forasmuch as our life on earth is as a shaddow, that we improve this shadow to gain assurance of eternal light: *Life here is but a fleeting shadow, that to come is an abiding substance.* Shall we for the pleasures and comforts of a life, which is no more enduring then a shadow, hazard the pleasures aud com-

forts of a life, which endures for ever. A man hath not a ſhadow of reaſon, not a ſhadow of true wiſdome and underſtanding, who will ſpend out a ſhadowiſh life in thoſe things which are but a ſhadow, neglecting that which is the true light, and will bring us to eternal light?

Attendat igitur homo in diebus umbræ ſuæ, ut faciat aliquid dignum deſideratæ lucis ſuæ. Aug. in Pſ. 143.

Bildad having put in this parentheſis as a reaſon why he ſends *Job* to the fathers, gives him an encouragement at the tenth verſe, to make this query, he tells him what he ſhall get for his pains in conſulting with thoſe former ages, and with the fathers.

Verſ. 10. *Shall not they teach thee and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?*

As if he had ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not loſe thy labour by inquiring into thoſe ancient times, ſhall not they teach thee?* Certainly they ſhall, thou ſhalt not come away empty, undirected, uncounſel'd.

Shall not they teach thee?

How, could they teach? They were dead and gone, they were paſt many ages before. *Bildad* may be conceived to anſwer, *Though the fathers are dead, yet they will ſpeak to thee, and counſel thee, as well as if they lived and ſtood before thee with our ſelves: They ſhall teach thee, and they ſhall inſtruct thee.* And more then that, they will not only teach thee in a complement, and ſpeak words to thee, but they will ſpeak their very hearts to thee: thou ſhalt find that they will give thee cordial counſel, they will utter words to thee out of their heart.

Utter words out of their heart.

The meaning of that is, either: Firſt in general, they will give thee the real conceptions of their minds about theſe points, they will ſpeak ſincerely, they will not ſpeak to thee from the teeth outward, but from the heart inward. Secondly, they will ſpeak wiſely and judiciouſly to thee about theſe things; they will utter, not ſo much words as Oracles to thee out of their heart.

Eloquio ex corde proferre, eſt ſapienter loqui, ſapiens cordatus dicitur; ſtultus exanimis.

The heart is the ſeat of knowledge and underſtanding, and a wiſe man is (*homo cordatus*) a hearty man, a man with a heart; and a fool in Scripture is ſaid to be a heartleſs man, *a man without a heart*, he cannot utter words from his heart, who wants a heart; he utters them from his mouth, or from his tongue. *A fools heart is in his mouth, and a wiſe mans mouth is in his heart*; he ſpeaks that which

lies

lies in the inmost receſſes and cloſets of his ſpirit: he ſpeaks from meditation, he brings what he ſpeaks to his heart, and from his heart utters what he ſpeaks. Chriſt aſſures us, *That a good man out of the good treaſure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treaſure of his heart, brings forth evil things.* Every heart is a treaſury. When a good man ſpeaks evil, he ſpeaks not from his heart (though he hath a ſtock of ſinfulneſs in him) but from his lips; and when an evil man ſpeaks good, he ſpeaks it not from his heart, but from his lips: for he hath no ſtock or treaſury of good within. An hypocrite ſpeaks good with a heart, and a heart with a double heart. A fool ſpeaks without a heart, yet of the two, it is better to have no heart then two.

Cor loquitur, quæ animus præmeditatus eſt; os loquitur ſine meditatione.

Or we may take the meaning of the words, as a ſecret reproof of *Job*; If thou wilt look after theſe fathers, and ſearch them, they will not ſpeak as thou haſt done, raſhly, unadviſedly and indiſcreetly, but they will ſpeak from their hearts, they will utter things of weight and ſerious conſideration. From hence obſerve,

Firſt, *That old men are preſumed to have a great ſtock of knowledge.*

Go to the fathers, they will certainly teach thee. Every man ſhould labour to have a proportion of knowledge to his proportion of years; we ſhould not be children in underſtanding, when we are men in time. The Apoſtle reproves ſuch as are ſo (*Heb.* 5.2.) *When* (ſaith he) *for the time you ought to be teachers* (look upon the yeares that are gone over your heads, and you ought to be teachers; you ſhould have much in your hearts for the inſtruction of others, yet ſo it is) *you have need that one teach you again, which be the firſt principles of the Oracles of God, and you are become ſuch as have need of milk, and not of ſtrong meat.*

Secondly obſerve, *They who are dead and gone, yet ſpeak to us as if they were living.*

Bildad ſends *Job* to the ancient fathers, go, they will teach thee and utter words out of their hearts. Whileſt we conſider what they have ſpoken and done, it is as if they now ſpake, *Heb.* 11.4. *Abel by faith offered a better ſacrifice then Cain, and being dead he yet ſpeaketh.* They who are dead ſpeak by their works, and they ſpeak by the words which they ſpake, while they were alive. The records which they have left give us counſel to this day. When the rich man (it is the ſcope of the Parable) I ſay, when the rich man (*Luk.* 16.7.) deſired that *Lazarus* might go from the dead to ſpeak to his brethren,

thren, *Abraham* answers him, *They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them*, &c. *If they hear not Moses and the Prophets neither will they be perswaded though one rose from the deap. They have Moses and the Prophets*; but Moses and the Prophets were dead and gone; how have they *Moses* and the Prophets? they have not the men before them, but they had their writings and records: they who read the Prophets writings hear their speakings. *Books are silent voices.*

If *Moses* and the Prophets may be heard when dead and gone, then much more may we hear Christ, since he died and rose, and his Apostles who are dead. And whereas some have an opinion that they do not know the mind of Christ, or that they cannot reform the Church or their Churches till Christ himself come from heaven to do it, or till there be Apostles sent personally to do it (they wanting an Apostle, cannot order the worship and ordinances of God, and therefore conclude against a present Church-state) I say to such, if that be your ground that you must have Christ and his Apostles to settle all for you, you have your desires. Look into the works and word of Christ, into the writings and practises of his Apostles, both for your rule and pattern. If *Abraham* could say, they have *Moses* and the Prophets, they may hear them: surely, we may say much more, we have Christ and his Apostles whom we may hear and consult about all the institutions and orders that concern the frame of his Church. We need not stay till Christ come down in person from heaven, or till new Apostles are sent, and furnished with instruction for this work, for we have Christ and his Apostles already, we hear what Christ spake, we read the rules which he gave concerning the wayes of his worship and government of his Church (in all the essential and constitutive parts of either) to the end of the world.

Thirdly, observe, *They that teach others should teach their own hearts to speak.*

It is best speaking to others with the heart. The heart will teach better then the tongue, yea better then the understanding, *The word which comes from the heart of the teacher, goes soonest to the heart of the hearer.*

Fourthly observe, *The heart is the true repository or treasury of holy truths.*

You may see where the fathers, the holy men in ancient time, laid up truth: they utter words out of their heart, then, truth was layed

up

up there. Truth is (as it were) the heart of God, and therefore we muſt put it into our hearts. *David* hid the Commandements of God in his heart: *Mary* laid up the words of Chriſt there. To have the word only ſwimming in our *brains*, is to as little purpoſe, as to have it only in our *Note-books*. To have truth only in our brains or in our books, will do us as little good as water in our ſhoes. It is a ſad thing to conſider how many thouſand Sermons are written almoſt word for word in books, and ſcarce a letter of them written in the heart. The promiſe of the new Covenant is, that God *will write his law in our hearts*: Let not any reſt ſatisfied in having the word written in their books.

Obſerve further, *Holy men of old did highly eſteem the word and truths of God.*

You may know the eſteem they had of theſe by the place where they laid theſe; the heart is the beſt place, the faireſt room in man. To put a thing into the heart, notes higheſt eſteem and approbation. When we ſay a thing is in our hearts, we cannot ſay more to expreſs our eſteem of it. When the Apoſtle (*Phil.* 1. 7.) profeſſes to the *Philippians*, I *have you in my heart*, his meaning is, you are moſt dear and precious to me. When I ſee a man preparing a ſpecial place, a ſafe place, a convenient place to lay a thing in, we conclude that the thing he would lay up is of value and account with him: when we are preparing and fitting our hearts to put the word and truths of God in, hereby we give a real teſtimony, that we honour the word of God. For the moſt part the truths of God (as we ſay of things we neglect) are caſt at mens heels rather then laid up in their hearts. We may know the eſteem a Queen of *England* had of the City of *Calice*, when ſhe ſaid, *It was in her heart, and there they ſhould find it, if they opened her.*

So much concerning theſe three verſes, containing an argument from antiquity, and the teſtimony of the firſt ages, by which *Bildad* confirms his former poſition, *That God is juſt.*

JOB

And not cut down.

That is, before it is cropt and pull'd up by the hand, or is fully ripe.

It withereth before any other herb.

That is, sooner or more speedily then any other herb of lesser shew, but better rooting. There are two causes why trees wither, both which are here removed from the rush, and yet it withers.

First, *Age*, but the rush withers while it is young in its greenness.

Secondly, Violence, when it is pull'd up or cut down by force of hand: but the rush withers, while it is not cut down. Both argue enough, the little subsistency which the rush hath in it self; to seek any further account about it, were but to seek a knot in a rush.

Vers. 13. *So are the paths of all that forget God*, &c.

Bildad having explained his similitude, now applies it. The comparison may be made out three wayes.

First, That hypocrites are kept in life and lustre, by outward, earthly supplies only, as the rush is by mire and water; and therefore when these fail, they fail also.

Secondly, as the rush dies, because it hath no water; so an hypocrite declines and wastes, because he is not watered by the blessings of God, and hath no rooting in grace. The *Seed cast on the stony ground* (Matth. 13.6.) *withered, because it had no earth.* The lack of earth to the one is the same with the lack of water to the other.

Thirdly, In the general, that as a rush flourishes a while, but quickly withers; so the best estate of an hypocrite, his greenness is of no long continuance; his seeming graces, like his joyes, are but for a moment. Hence observe,

Natural things are shadows to us of spiritual.

We may learn many lessons from speechless creatures. While we turn the leaves and peruse the contents of this great volume the book of nature, we may find much of the God of nature. *David* took instructions from it daily (*Psal.* 8.) *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him?* I say likewise

tells us of a land, *sending Ambassadours by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters.*

Can the rush grow?

In strength, lustre and beauty. The word implies growing with a kind of pride, so plants do in a rich or proper soyl, they lift up their heads, and carry it highly.

גאה

Elatus, eminuit, est mediæ significationis, sumitur pro vitiosa elatione, quæ est superbia etiam pro magnificentia & decore. Rivet. *in* Hos. 5. 5.

Can the rush grow without mire?

Which is as much as to say, can a man live without food? Mire is the rushes meat and drink. It loves and delights in a moorish soyl, and by the rivers side. A rush, upon the dry land, is like a fish upon the dry land. At most the rush among vegetables and plants, is like those fowls and beasts among sensitives, which live part upon the water, and part upon the land.

Limosus junctus, palustres jubet, Amphibia.

אחו

Can the flag grow without water?

The word signifies any fertile place for grass, a medow, *Gen.*41. 2. *Pharaoh* saw in his dream seven well-favoured kine, and fat-fleshed, *and they fed in a medow.* Some render it so here, *Can the medow grow without water?* Both flags and medows are such drinkers, that they quickly wither, if they want water: which *Bildad* gives us plainly in the next verse.

Locus graminis ubi pascuntur pecora forsan ab אח *frater quod ex una stirpe velati multi fratres gignantur, quasi herbarum quædam fraternitas.*

Vers. 12. *Whilest it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.*

Whilest it is yet in his greenness.] Or, shooting up in his stemme. Some derive the Hebrew word from *Ab*, *Father*; and so it may be rendered from the letter of the Hebrew, though the expression be somewhat uncouth. While it is yet in it's paternity, or fatherhood, that is, while it is flourishing and procreative. Others derive it from *Abib*, which signifies an ear of corn, or the ear with the stalk. Hence the moneth *Abib* among the Jews had its name, because in those climates, corn was then eared and began to be ripe; it was the first moneth to the *Israelites*, because of their coming out of *Ægypt*, and answered to part of our *March*, and part of *April*, Exod.13.4. Chap. 23.15. *This day came ye out in the moneth* Abib, *this moneth shall be to you the beginning of moneths.* So then, this greenness of the rush implies the strength and best of it, the goodliness and beauty of it.

אבו

Abib est spica maturescens, vel spica cum calamo, inde Ibbo *virgultū aut lignum virens in eo, sc. tempore quo est parens novarum frugum & frondium. Vel ab* אב *pater, q d. in paternitate sua.*

JOB, Chap. 8. Vers. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Can the rush grow without mire? can the flag grow up without water?
Whilest it is yet in his greenness and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.
So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrite hope shall perish.
Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spiders web.
He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

THis context from the 11th to the 20th verse, contains an illustration (for so are similitudes) of the former argument, and it is taken from a three-fold similitude. First, of a *rush*, which is explained, vers. 11, 12. and applied in the 13th verse. The second is, of a *spiders web*, explained and applied 14, 15. The third of a *luxuriant flourishing tree*, explained verse, 16, 17, 18. applied, verse nineteen. *Behold, this is the joy of his way*, &c.

The sum of all may be given in this brief;

That it is as equal and ordinary in the course of divine justice to destroy wicked men; as it is in the course of nature, for a rush to wither when it wants water; or, for a spiders web to break when it is leaned upon; or for a tree to be hewen down, when it either undergrows or overgrows its owners house; when casting it's roots under the foundation, it loosens the stones, and weakens the ground-work; or, when it spreads its boughs and grows so high that it drops upon the roof, or darkens the windows of it.

גמא

Juncus גמא *bibit, ingurgitavit, quia juncus est aquæ immersus, & eam semper imbibens, Conseritur bibula Memphyrûcymba papyro.* Luc. l 4. *Perq; papyriferi septem fluà flumina* Nili.

Vers. 11. *Can the rush grow without mire?*

It cannot. The Original word for a *rush* speaks its nature; the root signifying to suck or drink in, or alwayes to be guzling down. The rush lives in liquor, and is alwayes drinking. These abounded neer the banks oi *Nilus* in *Egypt*. There *Moses* was put into an *Ark* or *skiff made of bulrushes*, Exod. 2. 3. The Prophet (*Isa.* 18. 1, 2.) tells

wise, when we behold the grass and flowers of the field, the flag, the rush in the water, we may not only put the question, *What is man?* but we may resolve the question, what the man is: when we look upon the meanest creatures, we may see pieces of our selves, they are as we are in many considerations, and we as they; what is man? Man is as grass. What is a wicked man, an hypocrite? *He is a rush, He is like the chaff which the wind drives away.* What is a godly man? *He is like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.* The Spirit of God from things sensible and visible, raiseth us up to things spiritual and invisible.

The Ancients were very frequent in this kind of study, perusing the book of nature, and taking helps to better the understanding by every object of the eye. It is well observed by one of them, *That God sent us the book of Nature, before he sent the Book of Scripture.* The mind of God was written upon the things which he had made, before he made Tables or Books to write his mind in. The Fathers had many revelations from the beginning, but they had not Scripture from the beginning. Some conceive that *Isaac* going out into the fields to meditate, meditated upon the text of the creature, and used to raise his heart by those steps of earth to heavenly contemplations. It is said of *Solomon*, (1 King. 4. 32, 33.) *That he spake three thousand Proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five, and that he spake of trees, from the Cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall*; which * *Josephus* expounds thus, *Solomon* applyed his three thousand *parables* or *similitudes* unto those trees or plants about which he discoursed, drawing some divine moral from every plant, whose nature as a Phylosopher he had described.

Præmisit Deus naturam magistram, submissurus & prophetiam, quo facilius credas prophetiæ discipulus naturæ. Tertul. *Familiare est Syrûs & maximè Palestinis ad omnem sermonem suum parabolas jungere, ut quod per simplex præceptum teneri non potest, per similitudines teneatur.* Hier. *in c.* 19. *Mat.*

* *Cui libet speciei plantarum suam adhibuit parabolam!* Joseph. *in loc.*

More distinctly, for the spiritualizing of this similitude, consider wherein a wicked man or an hypocrite, is like unto a rush; the rush may be of good value to us, being thus improved.

First, the rush is a very spungy, hoven, hollow substance, it is not solid or close-grain'd: An hypocrite hath no solidity, we call him a hollow-hearted man.

Secondly, Hypocrites are well compared to a rush or a flag, because in windy weather they sit which way soever the wind sits. They take no harm by a storm, because they yield to every turn: let the wind blow which way it will, the rush breaks neither body nor branch. Let things turn which way they will, hypocrites

can shift, and bend, and yield with them. And therefore when storms arise, which pull down and destroy many goodly trees of Gods own planting, these rushes continue. Hypocrites keep their standing, because they never stand. A great man being asked how he kept his honour and preferment in so many changes of wind and weather, of times and Princes, answered, *By being a willow, and not an Oak.* He that can sway, seldome breaks. Hypocrites in the Church and State, live by the same principles.

Thirdly, A bulrush or a flag in time of a storm hangs down the head, but when the storm is over, it holds up the head, and stands upright again. This resemblance between the hypocrite and a bulrush is given by the Prophet (*Isa.* 58. 5.) *Is this the fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush? &c.* The bulrush in a storm seems to be humbled to the very ground, but in fair weather it is as high ever. Hypocrites in times of publick humiliation, hang down their heads, and seem to lay their mouths in the dust, but when the day is past, they quickly forget their sorrows. *If I* (saith the Apostle, *Gal.* 1. 18.) *build again the things which I have destroyed, I make my self a transgressour.* Hypocrites are the worst sort of transgressours, for they seem to destroy their sins one day, but they indeed build them again the next.

Fourthly, The rush and the flag grow only in miry places, where they may have abundance of water and moisture, which notes a kind of sensuality in them, and therefore they have their names from *drinking*. So hypocrites seem to be heavenly, but are indeed earthly: they are like the rush, they cannot live without store of water, they are sensual, they must please their appetites, and delight their palates. The Apostle describes them so, *They serve not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies*; they must be supported with the affluence of outward things, else they cannot hold out in profession. Whereas the godly and true believers can live, when the water is drain'd or dry'd away, when outward things fail and are gone. So the Prophet *Habakkuk* professes, Chap. 3. *ult. Although the fig-tree shall not blossome, neither shall fruit be in the vines, though the fields shall yield no meat, and there be no herds in the stall, yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, and will joy in the God of my salvation.* A godly man will grow when all the world decayes to him; he will rejoyce in God when all outward comforts fail him; hypocrites must have sensual supplies, or they are lost. *A feigned love*

of

of spiritual things is ever joyned with a true love of worldly things. Christ speaks of some who followed him more for the loaves then for the word. And *Judas* followed his Masters bag, more then his Master.

Fifthly, Bulrushes or flags yield no fruit at all, they only make a fair shew; hypocrites how green so ever they are, what shew or profession soever they make, yield no fruit of holiness.

Sixtly, A bulrush or a flag withers sooner then any other herb, that is, then other herbs that are not seated so near the water. And this agrees well with the hypocrite, for when the hypocrite begins once to wither, he withers quickly. He never had any true life, and he will not long appear to have any. When one that hath made a fair profession begins to decay, he decayes sooner then a meer civil man; a civil man will hold out in Honesty and Justice a great while, but a hypocrite gives over holiness and godliness presently. Besides, God blasts and withers an hypocrite sooner than any other man, because he hath abused and wronged God more then any other man. When judgements come they fall first upon hypocrites, *The hypocrites in Zion tremble*, Isa. 33. Trembling will take hold upon the prophane and openly wicked, but trembling takes hold soonest upon hypocrites; they have most cause to tremble, who were confident without a cause. False hope is the parent of real fear: and they who believe without repenting, shall repent without believing.

Verse 13. *So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrites hope shall perish.*

Sic sæpe illi accidit & usu venit, talis est eorum conditio. Drus.

So are the paths.] So, that is, thus it comes to pass, this is the way and the end of all those who forget God.

The path of a man is taken two wayes.

First, For his state and condition, *Psal.* 1. *The way of the wicked shall perish*; that is, the whole state of a wicked man shall perish.

Secondly, For his course and conversation, *Job* 33. 11. *He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths*, that is, he takes notice of the whole course of my life; all my conversation, all my tradings and dealings are before God. This path of mans course and conversation is two-fold. There is an internal, and there is an external path. The internal is that of the mind; the mind hath it's course, the heart hath a way, *Isa.* 57. 17. *He went on frowardly in the way of his heart.* The external path is that of outward actions:

ctions: That which we usually do, is our path. Thus the actions and works of God are called the paths of God, *Job* 40. 19. *Behemoth is the chief of the wayes of God.* Prov. 8. 22. *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.* Psal. 77. 13. *Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary*; that is, thy actings and doings are seen there.

Our actions are compared to a path in two respects. 1. Because we are frequent in them; that which is a mans course he treads every day. 2. They are called our paths, because they lead us to some end; every path leads us to some place or other. Some actions lead to life, and some to death, some lead to heaven, some to hell, some to Christ, and some to Satan, to one of these ends, we are travelling and journeying all the dayes of our lives.

Of those that forget God.

To forget God imports these four things.

1. Not to think of God, we forget that which we mind not. The first act of remembring is thinking. The thief on the cross prayed, *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdome*; that is, think of me for good. God is not in all the thoughts of a wicked man to obey or honour him, and a wicked man is not in all the thoughts of God, (in this sense) to bless or pardon him.

2. To forget God, is to disobey God, or not to do the will of God, Deut. 8. 11. *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God in not keeping his Commandments.* As to remember God, is to do the will of God, *Eccles.* 12. 1. *Remember thy Creatour in the dayes of thy youth*: that is, do the will of thy Creatour in the dayes of thy youth: so to forget God, is to disobey God, not to do his will. God is said to forget us when he doth not our will, that is, when we in prayer propose our desires to God to do them for us; the not doing of those things for us, is to forget us. *David* expostulates, *Psal.* 77. 9. *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?* He had prayed much at the beginning of the Psalm with success, *I cryed unto God with my mouth, even unto God with my voice, and he gave ear unto me.* He puts up other requests, which finding no present answer, or sensible acceptance, he cryes out, *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?* Now, as when the Lord doth not our will, he is said in Scripture to forget us, so when we do not the will of God, we indeed forget him.

3. To

3. To forget is lightly to esteem, to sleight the Lord. That which a man highly esteems, he keeps in his memory, and treasures it up there; and when a man forgets a thing, especially when he wilfully forgets it, he disrespects it, he sleights and contemns it, *Jer.* 30. 14. *All thy lovers have forgotten thee*; that is, thy lovers care not for thee, they sleight and esteem lightly of thee. When a man comes not at one whom he loves, he is said to forget him, *Jer.* 2.32. *Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire?* A maid hath a great esteem of her ornaments, especially of her wedding ornaments, and therefore she is often thinking of them; it may be she can hardly sleep the night before, for thinking of the rich garments, yea the bracelets and bables she is to wear upon the wedding day. *Can a bride forget her attire?* Will she throw these by the walls (as we speak) or cast them at her heels? Yet, saith the Lord, *My people have forgotten me dayes without number.* They have lightly esteemed me, I am not so much to them as new clothes, who am indeed their life; I am not so much remembred as unnecessary curiosities, from whom they receive all things necessary, and whose favour is the one thing necessary. *Oblivio affert contemptum.*

4. To forget God is to depart from God. We stay with God no longer then we remember him: as we cannot have communion with truth, so not with the God of truth, without an act of memory (*Heb.* 12. 5.) *Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord*, &c. A word forgotten is to us of no more use then a word never spoken. We are without all the good we forget; and to forget God is (*Eph.*2.12.) *to be without God in the world*; or, to live on earth as if there were no God in heaven, either in regard of mercy to be received, or of duty to be performed. Hypocrites forget God all these wayes; though their natural memory may be good, yet spiritual memory (and that only holds spiritual things) they have none. Observe hence,

First, *That the hypocrite is a forgetter of God.*

Every wicked man is forgetful of God. Hence we find these put together, Psal.9.17. *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the Nations that forget God*: But this is the special character of an hypocrite, he is a forgetter of God. Consider this (saith the Psalmist) ye that forget God; that is, ye hypocrites consider this (*Psal.* 50.22.) for he speaks of such as had taken the Covenant of God in their mouths; *What hast thou to do* (vers. 16.) *to take my Covenant*

in

in thy mouth? As if he had said, thou professest to be in Covenant with me, to have an interest in me, *Yet when thou sawest a thief, then thou consentest with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers, thou givest thy mouth to evil*, &c. Hypocrites take the Covenant of God in their mouths, but cast it out of their lives, *God is near in their mouths, but far from their reins* (Jer. 12. 2.) If the hypocrite did not forget, that God is about his bed, and about his path, and espieth out all his wayes, he could not be so false with God, so polluted in his wayes, so rotten in his inward parts. If an hypocrite did not forget, that God being a Spirit delighteth to be worshipped in Spirit, he would never be satisfied in worshipping him with his body. If he did not forget that God is jealous, that he will not hold them guiltless who take his name in vain, he durst not (which is his every dayes work) take the name of God in vain.

Secondly, observe, *That forgetfulness of God* (howsoever it seems no great matter, yet) *is exceeding sinful, a wickedness of the highest stature.*

Forgetfulness of God is therefore a great wickedness, because God hath done so many things to be remembred by. What could the Lord have done more to make himself remembred then he hath done? *Have I been a wilderness to Israel, or a land of darkness?* (saith the Lord, *Jer.* 2.31.) the words are an aggravation of their forgetfulness. As if the Lord had said, I have been a light to you whersoever you go, and whersoever I go my steps drop fatness for you, and am I forgotten? where can we set a step but we tread upon a remembrance of God? Every creature holds forth God unto us. He hath left his remembrance upon every ordinance, *Do this in remembrance of me*, saith Christ in that great ordinance of his Supper: yea all the works of his providence are remembrancers of him. He leaves an impression of his wisdome, holiness, justice, power, upon all he doth. Now for us to forget God who hath (as it were) studied so many wayes to fasten himself in our remembrance, must needs be extreamly sinful. Further, it is very sinful to forget God, because God doth so abundantly remember us. He hath not only done that which may cause man to remember him, but he hath man alwayes in his remembrance, especially in his own people, *He hath graven them upon the palms of his hands, and they are continually before him.* They who desire to preserve their friends fresh in memory, get their pictures in their houses, or engrave them upon rings and jewels which they wear

alwayes

alwayes about them. But he that cuts the image of his friend in his flesh, or draws it upon his skin, how zealous is he of his friends remembraneer. Pictures and annulets may be lost, but our hands cannot fall off. When the Lord would shew how mindful he is of his Church, he assures her that he carries her picture alwayes about him, not drawn upon a Tablet, or engraven upon the signet of his right hand, but upon the palms of his hands; as if he should say, I must lose my self, before I can lose the sight or memory of thee (*Isa.* 49.16.) He remembers her so, that he cannot forget her. And because the character and stamps of nature are more abiding and indelible then those of art, therefore he saith, (*vers.* 15.) *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee.* A woman may break the bonds of nature, but God will never break the bonds of his own free-grace. May not all this raise us into *Davids* rapture of holy admiration, Psal. 8. *Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him* with such remembrances? what is a wicked man, that God should give him bread to eat, and cloaths to put on? And what is a godly man that God should give him Christ to eat, and cloath himself withall? that, God should remember us is a wonder of mercy; but what a wonder of unthankfulness is it, that we should not remember God? What, or *who is God, that man should be so mindless of him?* Is not God worthy of all our remembrance? Is it loss of time to call God into our thoughts? Do we ever, or in any thing remember our selves so much, as when we remember God most? it is a wonderful favour that God should be mindful of us at all; and is it not a wonderful sin, that man should be so unmindfull of God?

Thirdly, Observe, That, *Forgetfulness of God is a mother-sin, or the cause of all other.*

It is the cause of this sin of hypocrisie, *Bildad* puts it as a fruit of forgetting God. Forgetfulness of God is three-fold.

First, a forgetfulness that there is a God.

Secondly, A forgetfulness who, or what manner of God he is, *Thou thoughtest that I was such an one as thy self* (Psal. 50.) Thou forgettest what manner of God *I* am: thou presumest that will serve my turn, which serves thine, or that every thing will please me which pleases thee; thou sayest, because it is no great trouble to thee to steal and lye, &c. therefore it is no great trouble unto me neither.

Thirdly, To forget God, is to forget what God requires; this forgetfulness of these three sorts is productive of any, of every sin.

Lastly, Observe, *They that forget God shall quickly wither, how great and flourishing soever they are.*

The reason is this, because the forgetting of God, is a departing from God, and he that departs from God, departs from the fountain of life. If the rush go out of the water it quickly withers; and if men will depart from God, they shall quickly decay, neither grace nor comforts can hold out separated from Christ. Why is the godly man *compared to a tree planted by the river side, which brings forth fruit in his season, whose leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doth shall prosper?* Why is the man that trusts in the Lord compared to a *Tree planted by the waters, that spreads out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh?* Jer. 17. 7, 8. is it not because the Saints always keep close to God, by Jesus Christ, who is as an everliving fountain of water to them, refreshing and moistening them so, with continual supplies of the Spirit, that *they shall not see when heat cometh?* that is, they shall not be afflicted with those evil effects of heat, drought, and barrenness. They who keep Covenant with God, may possibly feel some decayes, but dye they shall not, they shall revive and sprout up again; They shall again put forth their leaves as a plant, and their fruit as the garden of *Eden*; They shall bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing.

And the hypocrites hope shall perish.

חנף

Similavit, dissimulavit, occulte peccavit, per Metaphoram, pollutus, contaminatus.

The word which we translate *hypocrite*, comes from a root that signifies close and covered, and by a Metaphor, polluted, defiled, contaminated, because an hypocrite, though he be outwardly covered, and beautifully painted over, yet his paint is a spot upon him. All painting is but a spot, in comparison of natural beauty. An hypocrite is not so much painted, as polluted. Hence he is called a *vile person* (Isa. 32. 6.) *The vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity to practise hypocrisie, and to utter errour against the Lord.* We have the character of hypocrites, *Isa.* 58. 3. *They daily call upon my name as a people that would know the Lord: As a people*; an hypocrite doth but play a part in religion, he doth but personate another; like an actour upon a stage, who puts forth the several postures and gestures of a King, when as himself is some mean fellow. An hypocrite is described acting a double

double part; the one is, simulation, he labours to appear what he is not, he would seem to have some good which he hath not. And the other is, dissimulation; he labours not to appear what he is, he would hide and cover the evil that he hath. *An hypocrite is one who seems to be what he is not, and would not seem what he is.* He is a *Jew outwardly*, and his religion *circumcision outward in the flesh*, Rom. 1. 18. *He seems to be religious* (Jam. 1. 26.) *he is a whited Sepulchre* (*Mat.* 23. 27.) stately on the outside, within nothing but rottenness and dead bones. The hypocrite hath a *divided heart*, Hos. 10. 3. and a *double* mind, Jam. 1. 8. He is not half enough for God, and too much for himself.

externa facie interiorem sanctitatem mentitur.

Hypocrites are of two sorts, some in a large, others in a strict sense. Most wicked men are hypocrites in a large sense, though some are above hypocrisie, they are arrived at impudence. The Prophet speaks of such (Isa. 3. 9.) *The shew of their countenance doth witness against them, and they declare their sin as Sodome, they hide it not.* They declare it not as the mourners in *Zion* declare their sin, who are ashamed of it; but they declare it as *Sodome* her sin, that they may delight in it. But though there are some such as these, yet the greatest number of wicked men fall under the notion of hypocrisie in a large sense, because they keep their sins close, and hide them. Hence the works of sin are called works of darkness. Wicked men usually hide their wickedness, and shew that which hath but a shew, their goodness. But in a strict sense, he is a hypocrite that seems to be very religious, who hath nothing but God, and Christ, and heaven in his mouth; but in his heart and secret practises nothing but earth and hell. The hypocrite is like the Onyx-stone, of which Naturalists write, that it is clear and bright in the superficies, but the center is dark and earthy. This generation is pure not only in their own eyes (*Prov.* 30. 12.) but in the eyes of many men, possibly in the eyes of all men, *yet are they not cleansed from their wickedness.*

The hypocrites hope shall perish.] That is, the time shall come when he shall give over the hope which he hath hoped, or the thing shall fail him, wherein he hoped. First, the object of his hope shall fail him, that is, those benefits, blessings, accommodations and comforts which he looked for in the profession of religion, these shall fail him and prove false hopes. Hypocrites (*Mat.* 7.) plead with Christ for heaven, *Lord, we have prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name cast out devils*, &c. but their hopes perished, *Depart from*

me (saith Christ) *I know you not*. His hope perisheth when he cannot have the thing he hoped for. Secondly, The act of his hope shall fail, his hope shall be so long deferred that his hope shall die; he never had any true ground of hope, and at the last he shall not have a shew of hope. His hope shall perish.

Observe from the name given hypocrites. First,

That hypocrites are filthy and polluted persons. None are so ugly in the eye of God, as they who paint for spiritual beauty. Pretended holiness is more unlovely then professed unholiness to them that can discern it. As it is said of *Nabal* (1 Sam. 20.) *Nabal is his name, and folly is with him*: So we may say of an hypocrite, *filthiness is his name, and filth is in him. Nabal* had his name from folly, and hypocrites have theirs from filthiness.

Observe, secondly, *hypocrites may be full of hope for a time.*

They have somewhat (though it be unsound) upon which they build, they think what they do and are will serve turn, and go for currant with God: This raises up their spirits. Some hypocrites will be full of hope, even while they are descending to the pit of despair. Some hypocrites are not convinced of their hypocrisie to the very last: such die in peace, while they are going down to eternal war; They go away (as we use to say) like lambs, when their souls are among Lions, and they are tumbling into the place of dragons.

Observe, thirdly, *The hope of hypocrites will deceive and fail them, God rejects their confidences, they shall not prosper in them*, Jer. 2. 37.

Lastly, Observe, That *to lose our hope is the utmost of evils.*

Bildad doth not say that the hypocrite is damned, and shall go to hell, and endure the wrath of God for ever: This one expression, *Their hope shall perish*, amounts to all this and more, if more can be. Do but sit down and imagine in your thoughts, & contrive the utmost of all evils felt by men, yea the utmost (were it possible) of all the evils of punishment that are in the thoughts of God, and all are wrapped up and comprehended in this one word, *Their hope shall perish*. Hell, and wrath, and fire, and brimstone, and the worm that never dies meet in this one word.

Bildad

Bildad goes on to illustrate this by a further instance.

Vers. 14. *Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be as a spiders web.*

Vers. 15. *He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.*

The hypocrite clings about the object of his hope, as a man that is ready to drown takes hold on any thing, upon a straw or a rotten stick; but though he lean upon his house, it shall not stand, &c.

These words contain the second similitude, which is both a confirmation and a further illustration of the former; for having concluded in the 13. verse with these words, *The hypocrites hope shall perish*; he (as it were) doubleth and resumeth it here again, *Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spiders web.*

The original beareth different interpretations, and from that, several senses have been given of these words.

The word here used for [*hope*] is not the same in the Hebrew, which we had in the last clause of the former verse, *His hope shall perish.* This word was opened at large in the fourth Chapter at the sixth verse, where we translate it *confidence, is not this thy hope, thy confidence, the uprightness of thy wayes?* Now, besides, that the word signifies *hope or confidence*, it signifies also folly, inconstancy, frowardness of spirit, vanity and levity of mind. And thus some render it here.

כסלו

This hope shall be cut off.) That word also beareth different interpretations.

קוט *Debilitatus lâ-gue factus fuit, per metaphorâ, mœstitia, dolore, tædio affectus fuit, propriè, tanquam, βδελύσσομαι i. e. rem putidem, et quæ nauseam parit, aversari, & eam abhorrere. Non enim placebit e vecordia ejus.* Vulg.

1. To be weakned, to languish; and because things which languish and are weak, either are cut off, or are ready to be cut off; therefore it signifies likewise cutting off.

2. Further, the word imports gradually, 1. displeasing, 2. loathing or abominating, 3. chiding or contending.

The words yielding these senses, receive different translations and interpretations.

First thus, taking the former for *inconstancy or folly, his folly shall displease him*, or, *his folly shall not please him:* So the Vulgar. *Hypocrites never please God, and at last they shall not please themselves.* The wayes and works of hypocrites are ever displeasing to God, and they shall at last be displeasing to themselves. That's the sense of their translation.

And

And not only ſhall the wayes of an hypocrite be diſpleaſing, but they ſhall be a loathing,an abhorring to him: the Lord loaths him now, *The prayer of the wicked is an abomination*, and he ſhall loath himſelf hereafter. There is a double loathing. There is aloathing of repentance. And there is a loathing of deſpair. The former (though it be unpleaſant, yet it) is an happy loathing of our ſelves. Such loathing of our ſelves is pleaſing to God in the act, and will be pleaſant to us in the fruit (*Ezek. 6. 9.*) *They ſhall loath themſelves for the evils they have committed.* And again, *Ezek.* 16.47. and 20. 43. the word is taken for this loathing of repentance. But the hypocrite ſhall have another kind of loathing. What? a loathing of deſpair, ſeeing himſelf utterly loſt, and his hopes quite cut off, he ſhall be an abhorring to himſelf.

Hæc diſplicentia cum faſtidio quodam & tabeſcentia conjuncta eſt.

There is yet a third ſtep or degree of ſenſe in this word, He ſhall not only be diſpleaſed with himſelf, and loath himſelf, but he ſhall fall out with himſelf; his hope ſhall diſpleaſe or vex him, into ſelf-anger. Some render the word by contending or chiding: as a man that is diſpleaſed with another, falleth out with him, wrangleth and contendeth with him; ſo an hypocrite, at laſt, ſhall chide, contend and wrangle with himſelf: he ſhall contend as much with himſelf at laſt, as ever the word of God contended with him before. An hypocrite never cometh to a Sermon but God chides him, the Word of God contends with him, and the ſpirit of God hath a controverſie with him; this man will not be warn'd by the chiding of God, nor take that to heart, he ſtill goes on in his hypocriſie. But when no reproofs nor chidings can prevail upon his heart, he is left to the reproof and chidings of his own heart: which will read him ſuch a lecture, and give him ſuch a ſchooling as he never had in all his life. Conſcience may be long ſilent, and it may long flatter, but when once it begins to ſpeak, and to ſpeak right, it is the moſt terrible Preacher in the world. There is no *Boanerges* or ſon of thunder hath ſo dreadful a voice. Mount *Sina* it ſelf did not thunder ſo loud as conſcience will. And as conſcience ſpeaks loud, ſo it ſpeaks long. An hypocrite ſhall reprove or chide himſelf for ever; what a fool was I? what a beaſt was I thus to flatter my ſelf, thus to maſk mine own filthineſs, and to dawb over the rottenneſs of my heart with the fair covering of a verbal profeſſion? Why did I wilfully deceive my ſelf into irrecoverable perdition?

Secum ipſe litigabit, rixabitur, quæ omnia ad mentis commotionem & animi cruciatum pertinent, Pin.

Again, Obſerve from, *Whoſe folly ſhall diſpleaſe him.*

That

That the Whole course of hypocrisie is nothing but foolishness.

Of all fools the hypocrite is the greatest; and the reason is, because he takes a great deal of pains in profession, and hath no good at all by profession: he venture th himself many times in the world to persecution; he runs the hazard of his credit, of his estate, of liberty and life. What a fool is this to take so much pains, and subject himself to so many dangers in the outward profession of Christ, yet at last to lose the fruit and benefit of all? *This folly must needs displease him:* he shall at last see what an extream fool he hath been to trouble himself about that which bringeth him in no real good, but will really double and encrease all evil upon him. *No man sins at so dear a rate as the hypocrite.*

A second translation takes the *Noun* (as we) for hope, and not for folly, and retains the former sense of the *Verb*; and so the words are thus, *Whose hope shall loath him*; that is, the thing which he hoped for shall loath him; how loath him? It shall loath him, not formally, but equivalently, because it shall do that which man doth, when he loaths any thing; when we loath a thing, we flee or turn away from it; so *His hope shall loath him*, that is, the thing which he hoped for shall flee far away, and quite depart, it will not come near him. Good shall remove from the hypocrite when he expects and makes after it. An hypocrite at once loaths true grace, and hopes for true comforts: but comfort here and glory hereafter shall loath him, heaven shall shut against him.

Quem fastidit spes sua. Jun. *Eum quasi fastidius fugit id ipsum quod speravit* Jun.

Or take it for the act of hope (as others) *he shall loath his hope*, that is, the very hope which he hath had shall be grievous and vexatious to him, nothing shall grieve him more then this, that he hath hoped so much. His hope shall grieve and afflict him as bad as all his afflictions; *Raised expectations disappointed, prove our greatest sorrows.* That man sinks lowest in grief, whose heart was highest in hope. How extreamly shall the hypocrite be grieved, who falls as low as hell, when his hopes were raised up as high as heaven? The hypocrite both in his way, and in his end, is like the King of *Babilon. He saith in his heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the most high, yet he shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit*, Isa. 14. 13, 14.

Spes ei molesta erit, quòd eâ excidat, nec id consequatur quod expectaverat. Merc.

Take the words as we translate, so they yield a clear sense, and very agreeable to the original, *Whose hope shall be cut off.* * The word is rendered, *Cut off*, by a Metaphor, because when a man is exceed-

* *Sumitur Metaphoricè, quod ij qui tardet sese torquent, et vestes, & se membraq; sua discindant ac lacerant & velut dissecent.* Merc.

exceedingly displeased and vexed (as the word properly signifies) he many times tears his garments, and even cuts his own flesh, like the idolatrous Priests of *Baall*, who were so angry, because they could not get an answer, that *they cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancers, till the blood gushed out upon them*, 1 Kings 18. 28. *Grief cuts the heart always, and sometimes causes cutting of the flesh.* The Lord complains (Psal. 95. 10.) *Fourty years long was I grieved with this generation*, it is this word, *fourty years long was I vexed and cut with this generation*, with their murmurings, backslidings and unbelief. They did (as it were) cut the Lord to the heart; as in another place, *They broke him with their whorish hearts*, Eze. 6. 9. God speaks there as a man whose patience is almost spent, or, as an husband with the disloyalties of an adulterous wife.

And thus we may joyn it with hope, either as hope imports the act of hope, or the object of hope, *Whose hope shall be cut off*, the expectation which the hypocrite hath had shall come to an end; or a time is at hand when an hypocrite shall be past hoping. Observe hence,

Despairing is the cutting off of hope, and such is the condition of an hypocrite. To have hope cut off, is the greatest cut in the world. *Will the hypocrite pray always?* No, at last his prayer shall be cut off; *Will the hypocrite hope always?* No, at last his hope shall be cut off. The Saints in heaven have (in a sense) their hope cut off, because they are above hope: and at last all wicked mens hope shall be cut off, because they are below hope. It is better to have all our possessions cut off, then our hopes. Better have the threed of our lives cut off then the Anchor-cord of our hope cut off, and so we left to the rage and tempest of despair.

Again, joyn it with the object of hope, thus,

All that an hypocrite hopeth for or expects, shall be utterly taken away, and cut off from him.

His worldly comfort will be gone, and heavenly comforts will never come. He shall find that he hath been in a golden dream, that he hath been, as one that is hungry, who dreameth that he is eating, but when he awakes his soul is empty; or, as a thirsty man, that dreams he is drinking, but he awakes, and behold, *he is faint*, Isa. 29. 8. *When dreams satisfie hunger and thirst, the hypocrites hope shall be satisfied.* Hypocrites shall have as good as they bring. They bring God nothing but words and empty professions; and they shall

ſhall have nothing from God, but air and empty expectations; their real hopes, or the thing they hoped for ſhall be cut off. When hypocrites awake out of their ſleep, their hopes vaniſh as a dream. Not only doth the world, but the Chriſt on whom they hoped, prove a ſhadow, a fancy, an image, an idoll of their own making; their hearts were filled with leaves, inſtead of gold, as the devil coſens his greedy votaries, *Their hope ſhall be cut off.*

And whoſe truſt ſhall be a ſpiders web.

As hope before, ſo here truſt, may be put either for the act or object of truſt: and both (by a Synecdoche) for the whole profeſſion of an hypocrite.

Hope and truſt are often taken promiſcuouſly. There is a gradual difference between them, not an eſſential: Truſt being the ſtrength of hope, or the acting of a ſtrong faith. The original word ſignifies a very quiet, ſecure, ſetled truſt; when a man truſts upon, or about a thing, without caſting ſo much as a jealous thought after it. Thus the hypocrite truſts; he never ſuſpects himſelf; his heart ſaith all is well, Levit. 25. 18. *Ye ſhall dwell in the Land in ſafety*; the word is, *Ye ſhall dwell in the land in truſt*, becauſe an opinion of ſafety is the companion of truſt; when we truſt our condition is good, then we think our ſelves ſafe. בטח

There are two things noted by this word:

Firſt, boldneſs and confidence.

Secondly, ſecurity and peaceableneſs. The hypocrite feels no trouble and he fears none; the language of his heart is like that of *Babylon*, the mother of whoredoms and *hypocriſie*, *who ſaith in her heart, I ſit a Queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow*, Revel. 18. 6.

This truſt where it is true hath a double effect. The want of which diſcovers the falſeneſs of it in the hypocrite.

Firſt, it confirms and ſtrengthens the heart againſt all oppoſitions. And

Secondly: it encourages the heart againſt all dangers. He that truſts in God will walk thorow the valley of the ſhadow of death, and fear no evil: He dares take a Bear by the tooth, or a Lyon by the beard. In both, the truſt of the hypocrite faileth. He will work and go on boldly till he meets with oppoſition: he will work in a fair day, till he meets with a ſtorm, and dangers threaten; but there he gives over. *He that is not acquainted with the aſſurance of-*

fice

fice of heaven, will ſeldome, if at all run hazards here on earth. True truſt brings God and the ſoul together, but the hypocrite never comes near God: and then no marvell if he be affraid to come near danger.

Note from it, before we put the words together, thus much,

That an hypocrite hath a truſt of his own, a truſt like himſelf.

Whoſe truſt. An hypocrite doth moſt things which the upright and ſincere-hearted do, and he ſeems to have every thing which the upright and ſincere-hearted have. Do they pray? ſo doth he. Doe they hear? ſo doth he. Do they faſt? ſo doth he. Have they faith? he hath faith too. Have they the fear of God? he alſo hath a kind of fear. Have they zeal? ſo hath he; yea the zeal of hypocriſie burns hotter for a blaſt, then the zeal of ſincerity. He hath grace proper to his ſtate; falſe grace for his falſe heart; he hath truſt, ſuch as it is, a truſt which belongeth to all of his rank; ſee the character of it in the next words.

It ſhall be a ſpiders web.

עכנש *Tam animal, quam rete ejus, quod ſolet contexere ſignificat.*

The Hebrew is, *It ſhall be the ſpiders houſe*; the web is the houſe of the ſpider. We have the ſame word, *Iſa.* 59. 5. *They weave the ſpiders web. Iſaiah* ſpeaks of ſuch pretenders, *they truſt in vanity, and ſpeak lies.* Theſe were the ſpiders web, which they weaved.

But why is the truſt of the hypocrite compared unto the ſpiders web? I ſhall clear that in four or five particulars, which will be as ſo many notes upon this text.

1. Becauſe the profeſſion, and all the works of an hypocrite are very weak and unſtable, as the ſpiders web is. There is a kind of curioſity in them, but there is no ſtrength or ſtability in them. The ſpider works very curiouſly, but her houſe will not bear any ſtreſs of weather, much leſs force of battery. The ſpiders web is no match for a broom or a whisk. Thus it is with the profeſſion, the truſt of hypocrites, you may ſee a neat ſpinning, a fine thread of profeſſion, accurate weavings and contrivances; but when it comes to a puſh, it is not able to ſtand; if you do but touch it, 'tis gone. Some will ſtand out longer then others, yet all fall, as Chriſt aſſures us (*Mat.* 7. *ult.*) it is the hypocrite who buildeth his houſe upon the ſand. To have a houſe built upon the ſand, is no better then to have a houſe built in the cieling; when the ſtorm comes that houſe falls; and when the broom comes, this muſt down.

2. The truſt of an hypocrite is called a ſpiders web, becauſe he fetches

fetches and frames it (as it were) out of his own bowels: that whereunto he truſteth is wrought out of himſelf. That's the nature of the ſpider, ſhe hath no extrinſecal materialls to build her houſe with; ſhe doth not hew her ſtones out of any quarry, or fetch her timber from any forreſt (as we may allude;) the materials which ſhe hath, ſhe fetcheth out of her own bowels. The Bee makes an houſe, and fetcheth the materials from this and that flower: ſo the Bee makes a comb for a houſe: but the ſpider ſucks no flowers. Thus it is with hypocrites, their truſt and hope is as the ſpiders web, made out of their own ſubſtance; they eviſcerate themſelves, they fetch all out of themſelves. The meaning is, all their truſt is in their own duties, in their own ſtrength, in their own ſtock, in their own gifts, upon theſe they build, theſe are their houſe. We find the Phariſees truſt thus grounded, ſuch was his houſe. (*Luk.* 18.) *I faſt twice a week, I give alms, I pay all men their due.* He was very exact in righteouſneſs according to the Law; upon this, and out of this he makes his houſe; this is to make an houſe like a ſpider. *Though it be our graces we truſt upon, our truſt will be a ſpiders web.* The believer is well compared to a Bee; the Bee hath an houſe and honey, but the Bee fetcheth all from abroad, from herbs and flowers: believers have their houſe to dwell in, and their honey to feed upon, but they ſuck all from the promiſes of Chriſt, yea they ſuck it from Chriſt himſelf; they reſt not in the letter of the promiſes, but they go to Chriſt who is the matter promiſed, and the accompliſher of all the promiſes. Here they build their houſe, and hew out the pillars of it.

3. *Their truſt ſhall be a ſpiders web*, in the iſſue it ſhall periſh like a ſpiders web. How is that? Aſſoon as the houſe comes to be cleanſed, down go the ſpiders webs; when the houſe is ſwept, the cob-webs are firſt ſwept away. Thus it is with the truſt of all hypocrites: when God ſweeps his houſe, his Church, he quickly ſweeps out theſe ſpiders webs (*Iſa.* 14.23.) The Prophet ſpeaks of *the beſome of God*; the judgments of God are the beſome of God, by which he ſweepeth his houſe. God hath a double beſome, or a double uſe of his beſome; he hath a beſome of deſtruction, and a beſome of purgation. It is a beſome of deſtruction to hypocrites, and it is a beſom of purgation to his Saints. When either the beſome of deſtruction, or the beſome of purgation is in hand, the truſt of hypocrites is ſwept away. When the Prophet deſcribes the Lord in his great and terrible judgements (*Iſa.* 33.) 14. the Text

saith, *The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness surpriseth the hypocrite, who shall dwell with devouring fire?* God provoked is a devouring fire. How shall stubble and spiders webs stand before him? When trouble comes, the trust of hypocrites goes to wrack, they tremble then, for their trust is but a spiders web, it cannot stand one stroak, or endure the flaming heat. The hope of a godly man grows strongest in times of trouble, he is purified in the fire; and the hope of an hypocrite weakens, till it be none at all in times of trouble, it is cast out of doors amongst the rubbish, or is consumed with the fire.

4. Take this parallel between the spiders web, and the profession of hypocrites. The spider makes his web to catch and ensnare others, to catch the poor flies. She hath a double use of her house, to lye in it, and to entrap flies in it. Her house is a snare. The profession of an hypocrite is a spiders web in this notion; he makes it to catch flies with, to ensnare and deceive the simple, that he may prey upon them: he would count godliness a poor thing did he not make a gain of godliness; that brings him in food and cloathing, he lives upon it. This his deceitful web is so fine spun, and fairly woven, that you cannot easily discern any thing, but truth and beauty in it: hypocrites cannot be distinguisht by the out-side of what they do; their lewdness is under a cover. Some tell us that the Hebrew word for an hypocrite, may be derived from another, which signifies a cloud; the wickedness of such is wrapt up in a cloud; whence the latine word for a crafty, dishonest man, imports one who casts a cloud or a mist before his dishonesty: So that it is hard to make this discovery, till effects and issues make it. Only God looks quite thorow all clouds and coverings, he sees what is in the heart, though man cannot. God sees his contrivances are only to serve his turn, and attain earthly ends.

Nebulo, à nebula, qui men dacis suis nebulam quandam & tenebras objicit.

5. The hypocrite like the spider, thinks himself safe and out of harms way, when once lodg'd in this profession: He is ready to boast that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. So much for the similitude.

Animalculum illud valde imbecillum & malicioſum atq; meditabundum potius quam prudens domicilium ædificat in quo se tutam existimat. Bol.

Now follows the application of the similitude in the fifteenth verse.

Vers. 15. *He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand, he shall take hold of it, but it shall not endure.*

Bildad goes on to bring down his similitude to this particular. Thus

Thus the spider doth, and thus the hypocrite: the spider leans upon his house, there he dwells; and so the hypocrite, he leans upon his house, there he dwells and rests himself.

The word which we translate *lean*, is often used in the old Testament, to note the *vital act of faith*, the act of recumbency; Faith in the vital act of it is a resting upon another Now false faith imitates true faith, that will be resting and leaning. Faith whether true or false cannot stand alone, it must have a *lean-to*.

עָלָיו

Nixus, innixus est, reclinatus fuit, incubuit totis viribus, per Metaphoram, confidat.

He leaneth upon his house.

It noteth leaning upon a staff, or upon any stay (1 Sam. 1. 6.) *Saul leaned upon his spear, being weary in the battel.* And *Prov.* 3. 5. *Lean not to thine own understanding.* Wise men, men of deep reach and judgement, lean to their own understandings, their wits are their props (Isa. 10. 20.) *The remnant of Israel shall no more stay themselves upon him that smote them, but they shall stay upon the Lord,* or, *they shall lean upon the Lord, the holy One of Israel, in truth.* (2 Sam. 22.) 19. *they prevented me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my stay.* God prevents his people with mercy, and their enemies prevent them with unkindnesses; but the love of God out-runs the malice of man; his love stays up those whom malice would cast down. The Lord was my stay. And hence, the *Noun* of this *Verb* in the *Hebrew* signifies a *staff*, because we use a staff to lean and rest the body upon (Isa. 3. 1.) *Behold the Lord of hosts doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water. The stay of bread,* or, *the staff of bread*; because bread is that upon which the life of man leans or depends, as we depend or lean upon a staff. Bread is elegantly called a staff, because bread supports the life of man, as a staff doth the body. It implies this also, that the power, vertue and strength by which bread doth sustain us, comes from without; *The staff of bread*; he doth not call the bread it self a staff, but he saith, there is a staff of bread, the bread must have a staff (of blessing from God) or else it cannot be a staff (of strengthning to us) As the bread is the immediate staff of our bodies, so the blessing of God is the immediate staff of the bread: the bread leaneth upon the blessing of God as we lean upon the bread. As an hungry man leans upon his bread, so an hypocrite leans upon his house, *He shall lean upon his house.* That's his stay.

Scita est Metaphora cum fulcimentum panis usurpat pro pane fulciente, significans fortè vim illam panis accedere. Ut enim gressus senum reguntur baculo, ita panis dicitur habere baculum Mol. in Isa. 3. 1.

But, what is his house? *He shall lean upon his house.*

The

The house of this hypocrite it is two-fold; or he hath two houses. He hath a worldly house, and he hath a spiritual house. He hath one house made out of earthly materials, and another made out of heavenly materials.

Donum impij vocat bona & facultates ejus quibus homines sè fulciant, juxta illud, opes divitis arx ejus validæ. Drus.

He hath an house made out of worldly materials, and so some interpret this place, *He shall lean upon his house*; that is, upon his riches, upon his relations, upon his greatness, upon his friends, upon his correspondencies, upon the estimation that he hath abroad in the world, upon his reputation with his neighbours at home.

These framed and put together are a house which the hypocrite builds for himself, upon these he rests: and that's a truth, the world is an hypocrites support, the house upon which he leans. The money in his chest upholds him, not faith in his heart; his goods please him more then goodness. He easily believes that he is in the favour of God, because he hath so much favour among men. That's one house.

Bildad might aim at this, because *Job* was a man of a full and vast estate, the richest and greatest of all the men in the East; as if he had said, *Job, thou hast leaned upon thy outward abundance, upon thy sheep and oxen, upon thy children and servants, and now thou findest all but a spiders web, swept away in a moment.* Yet (I conceive) he means rather a house built of heavenly materials. And there are three sorts of heavenly materials, out of which the hypocrite builds his house.

1. Gifts: he hath knowledge and understanding in the word and wayes of God, the gift of prayer, the gift (it may be) of tongues, of prophesie and preaching. These are excellent materials, and upon these he builds his trust, that he is in a good estate.

The second sort of materials are holy duties, he prays, he hears, he fasteth, and he gives alms, and the like; these he doth, and out of these materials he builds his house, very strongly he hopes.

Thirdly, he hath finer stuff then all this to build his house of, he buildeth upon supposed graces; he can tell you, he hath faith, he hath love, he hath patience, he hath humility, and he hath sorrow for sin; he can count all these things, and out of these he buildeth himself an house of special confidence, such a house as he doubts not will stand all windes and weathers: he hopes to stand safe in judgement, under the roof and goodly fabrick of this house.

Out

Out of theſe three ſorts of materials, ſpiritual gifts, ſpiritual duties, and ſuppoſed ſpiritual graces; upon all theſe, and out of theſe he buildeth, and thinks he hath made an houſe that ſhall ſtand for ever.

The point I ſhall give you, taking in thoſe three ſorts of materials, is,

That gifts, duties, and ſuppoſed graces, are the ſtay and the ſtaff, the houſe, and the ſtrength of hypocrites.

Upon theſe they lean, and in theſe they ſecure themſelves; they reſt upon this bottome for eternity; Hence they even dare to plead with God himſelf about it. (Mat. 7. 22.) *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name, and in thy Name caſt out devils, and done many great wonders?* they truſted upon, *Have we not propheſied? Have we not prayed? have we not done wonders?* They thought thoſe ſufficient materials to build them a tower which ſhould reach heaven it ſelf; who can doubt but they who do ſuch things as theſe ſhall do well? The gift of propheſie, the power to caſt out devils, and work miracles, ſound high, and make a great noiſe. Yet at laſt, this tower of their confidence proves but a Caſtle in the air, or a ſpiders web. How confident were they who could plead thus with God: He hath opened the ſecrets of heaven to us, and do you think he will ſhut the gates of heaven upon us? we have preached, we have been inſtruments of ſaving others, and ſhall not we be ſaved our ſelves? we have caſt out devils, and ſhall we be caſt to the devil? we have not walked in an ordinary tract of profeſſion, but we have traded in wonders and done miracles, we have amazed the world with reports of the great things we have done, is all this nothing? Thus they plead with Chriſt, as if he were bound to ſave them by the Law of theſe ſervices: yet Chriſt tells them, *Depart from me, I know you not*: Surely, thought they, God will fetch his jewel for thoſe everlaſting burnings from among the rude *Heathens*, or debauched drunkards, adulterers, *&c.* not from among us. Were it not a wonder greater then any we have wrought, if we who have wrought great wonders ſhould not be admitted? one of the Ancients repreſents them in ſuch an amazement. *What means this ſtrange, unexpected anſwer from Chriſt, depart*, &c. Muſt we depart who have lived ſo near thee? Muſt we be damned, whom thou haſt thus honoured?

τὶ βέλεται τὸ ξένον καὶ παρὰ δόξαν τοῦτο τὸ λόγο, &c. Chryſoſt.

The Apoſtle *Paul* (*Rom.* 2. 17.) ſpeaking of the hypocriticall Jews, diſcovers

Tibi applex lu quod legem ſcriptam acceperis. quod frequens es in lectione & auditione legis.

diſcovers ſuch a confidence, *thou reſteſt in the Law*, as a man reſteth in his houſe, there he ſleeps and is quiet; ſo theſe in the Law, there they were quiet, that is, in the priviledges and outward profeſſion of the Law, or in a literal and outward obedience to the Law. The Jews built their houſe upon, or with legal righteouſneſs, *Thou reſteſt in the Law*; he ſpeaks both by way of narration, and likewiſe by way of redargution: He tells what they did, and how ill they did in doing ſo. *Paul* rejects this as refuſe ſtuff, as hay and ſtraw, as droſs and dung, as *confidence in the fleſh*, (Phil. 3. 3. &c.) Thoſe things which acted or enjoyed, are ſpirit, being truſted to, are fleſh. So prayer is fleſh, ordinances are fleſh, the righteouſneſs of the Law is fleſh; yea, *Grace it ſelf truſted to is fleſh*. The duties which Chriſt hath appointed are the houſe of the hypocrite: but Chriſt himſelf is the houſe of the upright; he would be *found in him*, (Phil. 3. 9.) not in duties or inherent graces. Saints deſire that much grace may be found in them, but they dare not be found in graces; they would ever be acting graces, but never truſting to them.

Secondly, Obſerve,

An hypocrites hope is high and ſtrong, that his eſtate is good now, and that he ſhall receive good at the laſt.

He leaneth upon his houſe. Some are without hope in the world, of whom we may ſpeak as the Apoſtle of an heretick (*Tit.* 3. 11.) *they are condemned of themſelves*. Some men have the ſentence of condemnation in their own hearts. But there are others, as you ſee here, who have great and ſtrong confidences in themſelves, who live and die with this confidence too; this they do upon the former witneſs. As the Apoſtle *John* ſpeaks concerning the witneſs which the Saints have for heaven, *There are three which bear witneſs*, &c. *and theſe three are one*: So there are three which bear witneſs to the hypocrite, and theſe three are one; they agree in one to deceive, as the other to give aſſurance.

Firſt, The world that giveth many a man a witneſs and letters teſtimonial, that his eſtate is good, his neighbours ſay ſo, they flatter him, and cry peace peace to him.

Secondly, Satan applauds him, the devil gives him his good word, and tells him that certainly his eſtate is very good.

Thirdly, his own heart will ſeal to all, he ſhall have *the witneſs in himſelf*, as it is ſpoken of the true believer. So that the hypocrite having ſuch witneſſes, a witneſs within himſelf, a certificate un-

der

der the hand of Satan, and letters commendatory from the world, all this must needs give him strength of hope, that his house shall stand for ever.

But see the issue, *He leaneth upon his house*; What then?

It shall not stand.

The word signifies to stand firmly and strongly, or to continue standing. He thought that the materials which he had brought together, and the hopes which he had raised upon them, would have been as Mount *Zion*, that cannot be removed, but he leaneth upon it, *and it shall not stand.*

עמד *Stetit, subsistit, mansit.*

Whence observe, *All that an hypocrite trusteth unto shall deceive him at the last.*

It shall not stand. Their webs shall not become garments, *Neither shall they cover themselves with their works*, Isa. 59.6. The language is proverbiall, importing highest disappointment: Who would weave a web, if he knew he should never have a garment by it? Or work hard, when himself must go naked? *Jer.* 7. 1,2. the Lord sends to the people by his Prophet, *Say to this people, Trust not to lying words*; that is, words which will deceive and fail you, you trust and lean to them, but they will fall away from you: What were those words? Even that they had a goodly house to lean to, they cryed, *The temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*: but I hope that's a strong house, as well as a beautifull, a man may lean upon that, upon the temple of the Lord, and do well. No, *The temple of the Lord leaned upon will be but a spiders web*; God gave the Jewes a temple to worship him in, and many of them worshipped the temple. We adore every duty we depend upon, and give the Ordinances of God the honour of God. We can stand no more by such trust to Ordinances, then we shall by the neglect of them.

These, and all the materials before mentioned, will be found too weak, they shall not stand. Gifts cannot commend to God. If a man had the tongue of men and angels, if all the knowledge that ever was scattered in the world were brought together into one head; this cannot commend him unto God. The devil is as full of knowledge as he can hold, and yet he is as full of wickedness as he can hold. Duties cannot commend to God.

And there are two special reasons why the hypocrites dutics cannot.

First, He is not at all changed in duties. He prayes and sins, hears and sins, professes and continues wicked closely, if not openly.

Secondly, He leans upon his duties. Could we suppose true grace leaned on, that could not stand. *Nothing is a sufficient strength for us to stay upon, but the free grace of God, and Jesus Christ*: Lean to these houses, for they will stand for ever. Of all other houses you shall say as *Adam* did of his wife, *Gen.* 3. 12. (and it is the word here used in the Text) *The woman which thou gavest to be with me*, to stay by me, to be a helper and a support to me, this woman hath given me, and I did eat, she hath been the cause of my ruine. The same will be said of all the gifts, and duties and graces, which we stand upon. God hath given them us, and he hath given them us as meet helpers, but they will deceive and ruine us, if we lean on them. We shall fall by them, if we hope to stand by them (Psal. 23. 4.) *Thou art with me in trouble* (saith *David*) *therefore* I *shall not fall*; it is this word, *Thou standest with me*. Christ will stand by us at all times, *Thou standest with me*, or *by me*: When the world faileth, and when gifts fail, and when duties fail, yea, when graces fail, in degree and activity, then Jesus Christ, and free grace will stand by us, Isa. 26. 7. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee. Christ is the only lean-to.*

עמדו
Deducitur à Gnamad, *mulier quam dedisti mihi, ut adstarit juvaret, esseque vicarium auxilium, ipsa author hujus mali exstitit.* Fagius *in loc.*

עמדו
Quasi apud me stans.

There is one clause further,

He shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

This clause is of the same importance with the former, only the sense is somewhat heightned. It notes, that the hypocrite shall not only lean upon his house, but he shall take strong hold upon his house, *He shall fasten on it*; so M. *Broughton*. A man may lean to a thing and have no hold of it; he that takes hold of a thing would make it firm to himself, and himself firm to it. Thus the hypocrite leans upon his house and takes fast hold of it, if it would fall from him, if any attempt to pull him away from it or he sticks to it, he will not let it go.

The word signifies to hold fast, strongly and prevailingly. *Jobs* wife (*Chap.* 2.) speakes thus, *Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity?* And God himself speakes in the same language concerning *Job*, *Doest thou not see, though thou hast moved me to afflict him without cause, how he holdeth fast his integrity?* the hypocrite (after his manner, *Mordicus tenet*) holds his duties, performances, gifts, tufty, or (as it were) with his very teeth, he will hold them to the

יחזיק בו
Eam mordicus tenens, se in ea stabilam & firmum semper fore putans: Merc.

the very death, and not let them go, the hypocrite will not give over, will be not beaten off from trusting to these false and weak propes, here he sets up his rest, he will die by his gifts, his duties his outward profession, and go no further.

It is our glory to hold integrity fast, to hold grace fast, yea and duties in point of practice and obedience; but it is our sin and danger, to hold them fast in relience and confidence.

It is a sad use which some make of this truth, when they hear that hypocrites hold fast upon duties, *&c.* they let go their duties; they let prayer go, repentance, and sorrow for sin go; they say, it is no matter for duties, they need not trouble themselves, Christ doth all. This is to turn the grace of God into wantonness. We must let go both our graces and our duties in point of justification, but hold them we must as our lives, in conversation, and the tenour of our lives. Prayer, hearing, fasting, repenting must not die, while we live; Do them we must, but glory in them we must not.

He holdeth them fast, but (yet) *it shall not endure.* That's the last thing. We see as often as the hypocrite rises to take hold of his hopes, so often his hopes fail him: (before) *It shall not stand (now) it shall not endure.*

לא יקום
à radice
קום
Surrexit, ad standum erectus stabilis, solidus mansit, perseveravit.

The word signifies, it shall not be established to him, he would establish this house to himself, but it shall not be established, his worldly estate shall not be established, his duties, his graces, his gifts, shall not be established.

The word notes that establishment which is made by a politick act or edict. It is the Jews operative word, in which they enact laws, *Esth.* 9. The word is used three times, (v. 29, 31, & 32.) for a politicall establishment of that decree, about the deliverance of the Jewes from the conspiracy of *Haman*, they established or made a Law for it. Laws are for continuance, therefore they are *established* and *settled*. An hypocrite would do so too, he would enact and establish what he doth, *but it shall not endure*, it will be null'd and repeal'd quickly.

The word also signifies, that which is *substantiall* (*it shall not endure*) that is, it shall not be as a substance, it shall appear at last to be but a shadow, Gen. 7. 23. *Every living substance was destroyed*, it is this word, that is, every thing that stood up and subsisted. So, *Deut.* 11. 6. the word signifies the substance and outward estate which *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram* had, *They and their substance went down into the pit.* The hypocrite thinks his estate is a

ſubſtantiall eſtate, yet both his worldly houſe, and his ſpirituall houſe, builded as was before deſcribed, ſhall moulder away and rot, they ſhall not endure. 1 *King.* 7.21. *Solomon* ſet up two pillars in the Temple, and an hypocrite in his building ſets up two pillars, and he calleth them after the name that *Solomon* called his, the text ſaith, *The one he called Jachin, and the other, Boaz; Jachin*, he will eſtabliſh, and *Boaz*, ſtrength. Which may note that the People of God, who worſhip him in his temple, have two pillars, two everlaſting pillars, they have *Chriſt, and the free grace of God to truſt upon*; theſe are the two pillars of the Temple, that ſupport our hopes, and the one is truly called *Jachin, eſtabliſhed*, and the other, *Boaz, ſtrength.* The hypocrite hath a Temple, an houſe, and two pillars, upon which he makes theſe inſcriptions, *Upon his worldly eſtate he writes Jachin, Eſtabliſhed; Upon his ſpiritual eſtate he writes Boaz, Strength*; but he will be deceived in both, *They ſhall not endure. When a wicked man begins to fall, nothing ſhall ſupport him.* As it was ſaid of *Haman* in regard of his outward honour, *If theſe men be of the ſeed of the Jews, before whom thou haſt begun to fall, thou ſhalt fall utterly*: So though when a hypocrite ſees his houſe falling, he takes faſt hold of, and endeavours to ſupport it, *yet it ſhall not ſtand*, fall it ſhall. *The righteous falls and riſe again, he falls ſeven times in a day, and yet is raiſed up again*, Prov. 24. 16. but when an hypocrite begins to fall he falleth down, down, for ever. It is ſaid of the righteous (Pſal. 37.24.) *Though he fall he ſhall not utterly be caſt off, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand*; but when a hypocrite falleth he ſhall be utterly caſt away, for his duties only hold him by the hand; he hath only ſomewhat of himſelf to ſupport himſelf with, therefore though he take hold of it, *It ſhall not endure.*

Vbi ſemel cecruerit impius non erigetur. Merc.

JOB,

JOB, Chap. 8. Vers. 16, 17, 18, 19.

He is green before the Sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.
His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones.
If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.
Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.

THe context of these four verses holds forth to us the third similitude, by which *Bildad* illustrates the condition of an hypocrite.

The similitude is explained in the 16, 17, and 18. verses, and applied in the 19*th*.

The hypocrite was first compared to a *rush and a flag*. Secondly, to a *spiders web*. But now to a *goodly tree*. This third similitude grants the hypocrite the best of his condition, and puts him in the faireſt posture that can be imagined, and yet all proves nought; his root is but rottenness, and his blossome shall go up as the dust; or his branches shall be cut down, and his root stubbed up. It is as if *Bildad* had said; *If you think I have spoken too little and too low, or have debased the hypocrite more then was meet, by comparing him to a poor rush or a flag, and his estate to a spiders web; then take him in his highest notion, let him be looked upon as a green flourishing tree before the Sun, fastening his roots, and spreading out his branches, yet you shall see, at the last, destruction is his end. Behold, this is the joy of the hypocrite.*

That's the summe, and the general sence of the words.

Three things are held forth in this similitude concerning the hypocrite.

First, His outward happiness and flourishing estate in the 16*th* verse, *He is green before the Sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.*

Secondly, His hurtfulness, or the anoyance which he doth to his neighbours and brethren, shadowed out in the 17. verse, *His roots are wrapped about the heap, and he seeth the place of stones.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, We have his ruine or cuting down, his destruction or pulling up, in the 18*th* verse, *If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him saying, I have not seen thee.*

His flourishing estate begins in the 16. ver

He is green before the Sun.

The word (*green*) signifies moist, juicy or sappy, proper to trees: So M. *Broughton* translates, *He is juicefull before the Sun.* And others, *He is full of sap.* In which sense the word is used, *Chap.* 24.8. of this book, *They are wet with the showers of the mountains*, or, *moyst* and *sappy*, receiving in many showers from the mountains.

רטב
Madere humidum succosum esse.

A tree green, juicy and full of sap, is in the height of his strength and beauty: Juice and sap is to the tree, as bloud to the veins, and marrow to the bones of a man; and therefore as a young man in the prime and strength of his age, is described by having his veins full of bloud, and his bones full of marrow, so a tree is described in it's greatest verdure, by having his root and branches full of sap and moisture. The hypocrite may be such a flourishing tree, *He is green before the Sun.*

Before the Sun.

לפני שמש

The Hebrew is, *Before the face of the Sun.* The word *Shemish* (*the Sunne*) signifieth a Minister or servant, because the Sun is the great servant of the world, and ministreth those benefits of light, heat, influence. This (by the way) should have kept the Nations from adoring it as a God, which both in name and nature was their servant. But what means this, *Before the Sun?*

1. Some take, *before the Sun*, to be only this, openly conspicuously, and in the sight of all; for to do a thing *before the Sun*, is to do it without covert or secrecy, 2 *Sam.* 12.12. Thus the Lord threatneth *David*, after that sin of privacy committed with *Bathsheba*, *Thou didst it secretly, but I will do this before all Israel, and before the Sun:* So the hypocrite, *is green before the Sun*; that is, he flourisheth in the eye, view and sight of all men. He hath fair leaves and branches of outward profession in the Church, and of outward prosperity in the world.

Ante solum, i.e. palam in oculis omnium.

2. *Before the Sun*, that is as a tree in Summer, when the Sun returns to us, or turns upon us. In the beginning of the spring the Sun returns: having travell'd furthest off from us, it comes to the verticall

verticall point, and turns about to us again. So that, *before the Sun*, or the Sun looking towards us, is a description of the spring. And so it is, as if he had said, *As a tree when the Sun cometh towards it in the Spring, and shines hot upon it in the Summer, makes a fair shew:* So the hypocrite is very green, joyful, full of contentment, whilst he hath the Sun of prosperity shining upon him, whilst those warm rayes of outward comforts, heat and nourish him, *so long he is green and flourishing.*

3. *Before the Sun*, that is (according to others) before the Sun shines too hot upon him, before the Sun scorches and withers him; as if he had said, The hypocrite is a green tree, till the heat comes upon him, till the Sun ariseth in his strength: but assoon as the heat of the day, or the year comes, this tree withers. An hypocrite cannot abide the extream heat of the Sun, whereas the godly have such an everlasting supply of moisture and sap, that let the Sun shine as hot as it will upon them they are green still. The ordinary heat of the Sun is put for prosperity: the extream heat of the Sun, is put for persecution. So, the meaning may be this, *He is green before the Sun*, that is, before the Sun of trouble and persecution ariseth, or (as some render it) before God looks angerly upon him and scorcheth his leaves, till then, *He is green and flourishing. Before* refers both to *time* and *presence.*

Antiquam sol veniat. Bibl. Reg. Ante exortum & ardorem solis, i.e. antequam sol inardescens eum aduret. qd. priusquam à Domino puniatur & visitatur. Ardor est ira Domini. Merc.

4. Others take it as a description of the hypocrites outward flourishing, which may be such somtimes as *holds out before the Sun*, that is, when the Sun is very hot upon him; And then this clause stands in opposition to the rush, which *whilst it is yet in its greenness withereth before any other herb.* If the Sun rise hot upon the rush, it withereth presently, where it wants outward moisture. But here *Bildad* seems to grant, or at least to suppose, that the hypocrite may possibly rise to such a flourishing estate, that he holds his greenness, even before the Sun, in a great deal of heat and trouble. Thus *Before* notes presence.

Ante solem, i.e. in ardore solis, arboris more, quæ pulchrè aliquandiu succrescens æstum non timet, imò calore solis [mo]rato adjuvatur & alitur. Merc.

Either way the sence is good, *He is green, before the Sun* cometh with his heat, that is, he cannot endure the scorching time of trouble: or, *he is green before the Sun*; that is, before some trouble or scorching, before some heat of persecution, this hypocrite may stand, *He is green before the Sun.*

And his branch shooteth forth in his garden.

Branch.] The word which we translate branch is derived from a root

יונק *Significat lactantem seu infantem lac sugentem; per Metaphoram sumitur pro surculo aut tenero ramo qui egit arborem. Teneriores ramusculi lactantibus pueris sunt similes.*

a root which signifies a little sucking child, or an infant; and the reason is, because branches which come from the tree, draw moisture and sap from the tree, as an infant doth milk from the mothers breast: therefore we elegantly in our language, answering the Hebrew, call such branches *suckers*, and we cut them off where we see many sprouting from one fruit-bearing tree, because they draw too much from the tree, and hinder the fruit, that's the meaning of the Hebrew word, *His suckers:* So M. *Broughton* translates, *His suckers sprout out over his orchard.* By these branches we may understand either his children, or his honour, his relations, or his reputation, these shoot forth and shew themselves as branches from a tree, *His branches shoot forth in his garden.*

In his garden.

Hortus à radice Ganan, *velavit metaphoricè protexit, quod septo protegi solet.*

That is, in that place which he hath fenced or taken in for himself; a garden is a plot separated and enclosed from those places which lie open and in common. So much the Hebrew word imports, coming from a root which signifies to protect or to fence a thing about, because gardens are places fenced, hedged, or walled in, *Cant.* 4.12. *A garden enclosed is my beloved.* Eccles. 2.5, 6. *I made me gardens and Orchards, and I planted trees in them of all (kind of) fruits, I made me pools of water to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees.*

Per hortum intellige omnes rationes, quibus suam tuetur & auget magnitudinem. Merc.

His branches shoot forth in his garden.] That is, he appears very beautifull and glorious, very green and flourishing in his state or condition, in his dignity and honour. He lives as in a garden or paradise: So the word is translated (*Gen.*2.8.) *And the Lord God planted a paradise, or a garden of delight.* The hypocrites garden is all that by which he preserves and keeps his worldly comforts, as we do plants and flowers of profit or delight in gardens. Thus the hypocrite grows as a goodly tree, and shooteth forth his branches.

This is the first part of the description of his flourishing estate. Hence note a point or two.

First, In generall (which hath heretofore been observed, therefore I shall but touch it.) *viz.*

That a wicked man, an hypocrite, may abound exceedingly in outward prosperity.

He is a tree, green before the Sun, and shooting forth his branches in a garden.

Second-

Secondly, Note, *That the thriving of hypocrites, their greenness and flourishing is only outward.*

The tree is green before the Sun, but he is withered in his soul. *Hypocrites* do all before the Sun, to be seen, or in the sight of men. They are of those who rebell against the light, which would keep them from sin, and they say, *No eye sees us*, while they are sinning. But they love the light which shews any good they do; then they say, O that all eyes did see us. Pharisees pray in the markets, and blow a trumpet when they give alms, that the ears of all, as well as the bellies of the poor, may be filled with their charity. *Come see my zeal*, saith *Jehu*. *Moses* was faithfull, but he never said, Come see my fidelity. *Joshua* was valiant in the battels of the Lord, yet he never said, come, see my fortitude. The upright heart cares not to be thus before the Sun: He delights in secret holiness. His goodness is not less priz'd, or less pleasing to him, because it is hidden. He takes infinitely more content in being and doing good, then in being known to be or do good.

Thirdly, Taking, *before the Sun*, to note the extream heat of the Sun, we may observe thus much from it,

That an hypocrite may endure trouble and persecution for his profession.

He is not like the rush which presently withereth, but he is sometimes like a tree that standeth it out before the Sun a great while. We know that many have not only performed outward acts of holiness, but they have sometimes suffered in a holy cause; they can be passive in obedience, as well as active, and yet have fallen away at the last. Before the Sun of prosperity the hypocrite will continue green very long; and before the Sun of persecution he may continue green a while. It is conceived by most that *Alexander* the Coppersmith spoken of by *Paul* (2 Tim. 4. 14.) as a man very grievous to him, *Alexander the Coppersmith did me much evil*, he opposed the Apostle, yet, I say, this *Alexander* is conceived to be the man of whom we read (*Act.* 19. 32.) that stood to *Paul*, when he was in that danger at *Ephesus*; there he had like to have lost his life for appearing on his side, the text saith, *They dragged him out of the multitude to the market place*. It is possible for an hypocrite to be green before the Sun of persecution, at least before some scorching beams of that Sun, though he is not able to bear it when it comes to the utmost tryal, to the extream heat of the day.

Thus we ſee the hypocrites greenneſs in his branches, yet that is not all, for in the next verſe we find his roots alſo, he is ſeemingly ſet below, as well as beautiful above. And when a tree hath flouriſhing branches, and firm roots, what can be deſired more? For, as when a tree is cut down root and branch, it is then utterly taken away; ſo when a tree flouriſheth, root and branch, it is in beſt eſtate, and higheſt perfection. Both theſe meet here, not only doth he ſhoot forth his branches in his garden, *But he wrappeth his roots about the heap, and ſeeth the place of ſtones.*

His roots are wrapped about the heap.

Radices ſunt divitiæ, liberi, amicitiæ, dignitates, honores.

The root of this hypocritical tree, is that by which he faſtens himſelf, any accommodation or ſtrength which he hath in the world, credit, riches, friends, what ſoever ſtrengthens a man, that's his root: it is as neceſſary to faſten a tree, as to moiſten and feed a tree: Now (ſaith *Bildad*) he ſpreads his roots, he hath not only excellent branches outwardly, but he layes his matter ſo, that he hath rooting alſo in the world; yea, he ſeems to have rooting in the Church too.

His roots are wrapped about the heap.

גל à radice גלל Volvit à ſummo ad imum.

The word in the *Hebrew* ſignifies, to roll, or to bring things together, to put them up in a heap. *Hence* the Verb is uſed for that act of the ſoul in believing, whereby a Chriſtian gathers himſelf together, and all that he hath, and layes it upon the Lord, *Pſal.* 22. 8. *He truſted in the Lord*; the *Hebrew* is, *He rolled himſelf upon the Lord.* Hence it is tranſlated to ſignifie; Firſt, a tempeſt, wherein the winds roll and are enfolded together. Secondly, a wave of the ſea, which is a rolling water. Thirdly, as here, a heap, becauſe in a heap, a great many ſtones are gathered or rolled together. As *Gen.* 31. 47. after that conteſt and debate of *Laban* with *Jacob* about his departure, *Jacob* ſaid, *Let us gather ſtones together, or roll ſtones together, and make an heap*; *and Laban* gave it a name, he called it, *Jeger-ſhahadutha*, which is to ſay, *A heap of witneſs*, becauſe theſe ſtones were rolled together for a witneſs.

Laſtly, (which ſenſe is applyed by ſome interpreters to this text) The word ſignifies a ſpring or a fountain, *Joſh.* 15. 19. becauſe ſprings and fountains are as the gathering together of waters: the

ſea is called the gathering together of waters (*Gen.* 1.) there waters are rolled, and laid as upon a heap; and ſo proportionably every ſpring, fountain and river, is a place wherein the waters are rolled or wrapped together. Some tranſlate the word thus, *His roots are wrapped about the water, or about the fountain.* And that further ſets forth the ſeemingly ſure and ſteadfaſt eſtate of the hypocrite; as he hath goodly green branches above, ſo his roots are wrapped about the fountain, he looks as if he were planted by the waters ſide, as the flouriſhing tree deſcribed, *Pſal.* 1. A godly man *is as a tree planted by the rivers ſide*; ſo the hypocrite ſeems to have his roots wrapped about the waters, as if he had an everlaſting ſupply from an everliving fountain, as if his leaves ſhould not wither, or his fruit fall off from him. That's one ſenſe.

But moſt go with our tranſlation, *His roots are wrapped about the heap*, they are intricated and folded about the heap of ſtones; and ſo the meaning of it may be given three wayes.

1. In that it is ſaid, *His roots are wrapped about the heap, the heap of ſtones*; it notes his thriving againſt all oppoſition, here ſhadowed by heaps of ſtones. Heaps of ſtones are hinderances to the growing of a tree, to the rooting of it: Therefore we ſet or plant trees in places free from ſtones; but to ſhew that he may even overcome, conquer and ſubdue thoſe difficulties which hinder his growth, he ſaith, *His roots are wrapped about the ſtones.* The ſeed that was caſt in ſtony ground could not take root, the ſtones hindered it from a due depth of earth, *Mat.* 13. 15. So that *Bildad* according to this ſenſe magnifies the hypocrite, and ſpeaks high of him, *He wrappeth his roots about the ſtones*, he grows in places of greateſt advantage. A wicked man may conquer oppoſitions, and prevail againſt the pull-backs which hinder his worldly, yea and his ſeeming ſpiritual eſtate; he may encreaſe when he wants encouragements and means of increaſe, yea, he ſometimes encreaſes againſt ſtops and diſcouragements, he thrives among ſtones.

Impius aliquando floret inter varia impedimenta.

2. *His roots are wrapped about the heap*, notes that he thrives, or will thrive, if he can, though it be to the hinderance and damage of others: for by the heap ſome underſtand the foundation of an houſe, where ſtones are artificially heaped or laid together, not a natural or accidental heap. Trees that grow near a houſe ſhoot their roots under or about the foundation of the houſe, and ſo may be dangerous to the whole ſtructure. Thus the hypocrite will

Ita latè radicem diffundat ut fundamenti ſtruem offendat in ædibus Domini ſui. Jun. *In aliorum damnum propagatio denotatur.* Idem.

grow if he can, though he inwraps himself about the foundation of another mans house, raising or securing his estate upon his neighbours wrong or ruine.

Hypocrites care not whom they injure, so themselves may thrive, though they undermine the foundation of another mans house, and loosen his estate, to fasten their own.

3. *His roots are wrapped about the heaps*, may note the firmness, and the seeming strength of his standing. He is rooted, not in some loose and sandy earth, or in tougher clay, but his roots are wrapped about a heap of stones. As (*Mat.* 7.) the house founded upon the sand could not continue when the storms came, but the house founded upon the rock did; so a tree that is rooted only in loose, sleight ground, cannot stand against a great tempest, we see such trees blown down; but that which is rooted among the stones, and wrapped about their heaps, that which interweaves and incorporates it self (as it were) with a rock, this hath strength against all storms. Thus hypocrites pretend to Christ, and say they have wrapped themselves a bout that rock; they will speak great words, and bid defiance to all the world can do, professing they have laid up a good foundation, and that the munition of rocks is their defence.

Domum lapidum cernet, id, est inter lapides fœlici ev provenit.
ἐν μέσῳ χαλίκων ζήσεται. Sept.
Inter lapides commorabitur. Vulg.
Domum lapidum occulis vidit. Druſ.

And seeth the place of stones.

The words may be translated, *He dwelleth and he stayeth in the place of stones*, or, *he plants himself among the stones*; and then it carries the same sense with the former clause: So Mr. *Broughton*, *He platteth about the house of stone.* The Septuagint thus, *He shall live in the midst of the stones*: And the Chaldee Paraphrast, *He shall see with his eyes the place of stones.* We are near that sense, *And seeth the place of stones*: That is (for all these rendrings of the Hebrew will come to a fair agreement, and the result is this he lives, abides, converses or dwells, even, where there seemes to be the least probability of his stay, he stayeth in the place of stones.

בית
Domus vel generaliter sedes, vel locus quod aliquid capitur vel continetur.

The Hebrew is, *house of stones*; and house is taken either for that special place wherein men dwell, or generally for any place; so that, *the house of stones*, is either a house naturally built; Nature useth a kind of art; or an house artificially built: art is but an imitation of nature. *He seeth*, that is, he seems to abide or continue in that house of stones, he is very eminent or glorious in that place:

place: The same word is read (*Dan.* 8. 5.) where *Daniel* speaking of his vision, saith, *The Goat which he saw in the vision had a notable horn*; the Chaldee is, *a horn of sight*, he had a horn of sight, that is a conspicuous or a notable horn: or, as others render it, he had a perplexed, enfolded, or enwrapped horn, a wreathed horn. So that the word signifies both the conspicuousness of a thing, and likewise the infoldness and complication of it.

קרן חזות

Cornu aspectus est cornu conspicuum & eminens, quod supra alia cernatur. Alij cornu perplexitatis, id est, perplexum & intricatum. Merc.

A learned Interpreter gives yet another sense, *He looks into the house of stone*; that is, he hinders the light, or darkens the house by perking up so proudly by, or near the windows; as if he had said, he annoyes his Masters house both below and above, at the foundation, and at the windows.

The state of the hypocrite thus setled and made firm among stones, is yet a tottering one, it will not be able to stand, the 18. verse shews this.

Vers. 18. *If he destroy him from his place, it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.*

There is much difficulty in giving a clear sense of these words.

If he destroy him from his place.

If he) Who is the Antecedent to this *he*?

There is no antecedent expresst in the Hebrew. Some understand it thus, *if he*, that is, if the Lord, if God come to take vengeance on this man, who seems to be a tree, so highly grown, and so deeply rooted.

Secondly, we may carry on the similitude thus, *If he destroy him*, that is, if the Gardner or the Husbandman; if the Master or owner of that ground or place, seeing a tree thus luxuriant, growing so near the foundation of his house, and so wrapped about the place of stones, hindering the light, darkning the windows of his house; if he come to destroy or cut him down, it shall deny him.

Or, thirdly, *if he destroy him*; that is, if the Sun destroy him: So Mr. *Broughton* translates, *If the Sun root him up from his place*. But can the Sun root a tree up from his place? Yes, the Sun roots up a tree, when the Sun, before which a tree flourishes a while, casts his beams so hot upon it, that it is scorched. Extream heat draws out all the moisture of a tree, and kills it. In that sense the sun may be said to root up a tree, the Sun killing the tree, causeth it to be rooted

rooted up. Thus we see divers Antecedents answering the *he*, the agent in the Text.

If he destroy him from his place.

בלע

Absorbuit, devoravit, Metaphoricè, corrupit, destruxit, consumpsit, quia quod deglutitur perditur, absumitur.

The word which we translate *destroy*, signifies properly to swallow down, as a man swallows down meat and drink: And it signifies to swallow as a man swallows when he is very hungry; a man that is very hungry eats his meat greedily; he throws it down whole into his throat rather then chews it. Now, because when meat is swallowed down, the meat is consumed and spent, and is destroyed and comes to nothing, therefore the *Hebrews* elegantly translate that word, which properly signifies to swallow up, to destroy; to destroy is to swallow up: And in that sence (*Isa.* 28. 7.) wine is said to swallow up a man, that is, to destroy and consume him. *Intemperate persons swallow up wine, and at last wine swallows up them*: The wine drinks up their estates, their wits, their healths, their lives, their all at last. It is a metaphor taken also from cruel and savage beasts, who devour men; as *Jacob* saith of *Joseph*, *Surely a wild beast hath devoured*, or *swallowed him up*: And (*Psal.* 35. 25.) we have that word applyed to wicked men, conspiring against the Saints, they say, *We have swallowed him up, ah, so would we have it*; that is, we have utterly destroyed him, this pleases, this goes well on our side.

Per eleganter qui vinum ut-tum deglutiunt, à vino absorbi dicuntur. Pined

Then the meaning is, though the tree be in this state, yet if the husbandman come, he can quickly destroy it from his place: Yea, though it be thus fairly grown, and firmly rooted, the Sun is able to kill this tree, and to draw out all it's moisture, and so leave it dry and seared, fit only to be stubbed up for fewel. Or take it for an hypocrite, to whom the similitude referreth, If God come to destroy him out of his place, to swallow him up, there's an end of him quickly, *It shall deny him, saying, I have not seen him.*

From this consideration, that the destruction of the tree is spoken of so immediately after the flourishing of it; that word, *He is green* &c. is no sooner out, but he adds, *If we destroy him* &c. We may note,

That the destruction of hypocrites and wicked men cometh often upon them, in the height of their prosperity.

Even in the time of his greenness, he shall be destroyed, and when his roots are wrapped about the heap. Trees stand so long sometimes that they wither of themselves, and then we cut them down

down for the fire; but this man ſhall be cut down like a tree in his prime, in his flouriſhing, when affliction and withering ſeem fartheſt off, when he thinks leaſt of deſtruction, then it ſhall come upon him; when his eſtate is like *Jonah's* gourd, a very pleaſant plant, and a great rejoycing to him, a worme ſmites the roots and kills it.

That of *Job* (*Chap.* 20. 22.) is full to this point, *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtraits*: A ſtrange thing, that a man ſhould be in ſtraits, when he is in greateſt enlargement, that a man ſhould be emptied when he is full, that a man ſhould be nothing when he hath all ſufficiency about him, yet thus it ſhall be, *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtraits.* As a godly man hath a ſufficiency in his wants, yea a fulneſs of ſufficiency in his wants: So on the other ſide, an hypocrite whoſe heart is falſe with God, hath want in his ſufficiency, yea want in the fulneſs of his ſufficiency. Which may be underſtood two wayes; either that his fulneſs in the greateſt ſufficiency of it is unſatisfying; or that his fulneſs in the greateſt ſufficiency of it, is upon decaying and abating. (*Pſal.* 78. 13.) *Whileſt the meat was in their mouths, the wrath of God fell upon them*; while meat is in the mouth, rich clothes upon the back, while ſtore of money is in the purſe, while the land brings forth abundance of encreaſe, even in all theſe ſufficiencies a man may be in ſtraits. As it was with *Agag* (1 Sam. 15.) *Surely* (ſaith he) *the bitterneſs of death is paſt*; he thought himſelf ſafe, and that the ſtorm was quite blown over, but then, in that nick of time comes *Samuel* and cutteth him in pieces. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith (2 *Cor.* 1. 9.) *I had the ſentence of death in my ſelf*; that is, I concluded I could not ſurvive thoſe ſufferings, I thought my ſelf a loſt man: yet the Lord delivered him, and fetched him from the grave. But when hypocrites (like *Agag*) have the ſentence, yea the ſweetneſs of life in themſelves; when they ſay peace and ſafety, then ſudden deſtruction comes, as pain upon a woman in travel, and they ſhall not eſcape: God cuts them off. It follows,

If he deſtroy him from his place; what then? *It ſhall deny him, ſaying, I have not ſeen thee.*

Here is a further aggravation of his miſery, when he is deſtroyed, *It ſhall deny him*; what ſhall deny him? Some read it thus, *his place ſhall deny him.* Can a place ſpeak, affirm, or deny? No, it cannot; but it is uſual in Scripture, by a *Proſopopeia*, a fiction of a perſon

a person to ascribe speech to beasts, to trees and places too, things not only without reason, but without life. Such an elegancy is here, *It shall deny him*; that is, when he is destroyed, if any man shall ask the question, where is this man? Where is this goodly tree that stood here before? The place shall answer, *He is not here now.*

כחש *Mentietur si ὁτόπος ψεύσεται αὐτόν* Sept. *Per prosopopeiam tribuit sermonem et mendacium rei inanimæ; quod insolens non est in his libris. Ita è loco suo excidetur et interibit, ut nullus jam agnoscat eum ibi unquam fuisse.* Merc.

The Hebrew is, *The place shall lie*; the place shall feign and say, we have not seen him; we know not what is become of him? So men use to answer, when they are either affraid or ashamed to own one that is asked for.

Some understand it of a person: *Then one may deny him: I see then no more*, so M. *Broughton*. Suppose a traveller, who oftentimes past by, and saw this goodly tree, when he cometh to the place again, sees it no more, the tree is down: So he, who hath past by such a mans house, and beheld his goodly seat, when he comes another time, there is no such man there, the man is gone, *It*, or *he shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.*

I have not seen thee.

We have near the same words, *Psal.* 37. 35. 36. where the flourishing estate of a wicked man is shadowed under the notion of a tree, *I have seen the wicked flourishing like a green bay tree*, &c. (yet) *he past away, and he was not*; as much as to say, if it be asked, what's become of him? a man shall answer, he hath not seen him; yea, *I sought him, but he could not be found.* Such a sense hath been shewed (*Job* 7. 18.) upon those words, *The place thereof shall know him no more*; a clear riddance shall be made of all men out of the world, especially of wicked men. In that description (*Dan.* 2. 35.) of the four Monarchies, under the similitude of a *great Image whose head was of gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and thighs of brass, his legs of iron, and his feet of iron and clay*; the text saith, *Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the Summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them*; or, as the Chaldee, *They were found in no place*: A time will come when all Monarchies and worldly kingdoms, which have stood up in so much lustre, which have dazled the eyes of all beholders with their splendour, and kept all their neighbour nations under by their power (a time shall come) when this clay, and iron, and brass, and silver, and gold, shall be all beaten to pieces, so that

that if a man ask, where are the *four Monarchies*? What's become of the pomp and state of those great Empires? *The places of them shall know them no more*; no man can tell where they are. There is such a meaning here: This green tree, this hypocrite shall have his branches so pull'd off, his roots so stubbed up; that it will be hard to give an account what's become of him.

We find the happy and flourishing estate of the Church and people of God described, as if no place were large enough for them to dwell in (*Zech.* 10.16.) *I will bring them again out of the land of Ægypt, and gather them out of Assyria*, &c. that is, I will gather my Saints, my Church together from all the parts of the world where they have lived (while they could not live, but sculking in corners) I will bring them together so conspicuously, *that there shall be no place found for them*; that is, no place capacious enough to receive them and their families. We have the same promise of enlargment (*Isa.* 49.) *They shall say, The place is too strait for me, give place to me that I may dwell.* Now, as the Saints shall be gathered together so eminently and abundantly, that no place shall be found big enough to hold them; so the hypocrite with all his greenness and verdure shall be so blasted and rooted up, that the place where he was shall not be visible, as his; he shall be so far from filling all places, that he shall fill none, *The place where he dwelt shall spue him out, and by any remaining symptome it shall not be known, where that man was.*

So then, the sum of all may be given thus, taking the comparison from the tree to this wicked man;

That as a tree highly grown and deeply rooted, may be so cut down and stubbed up, that it shall not be known whether ever it grew upon that place or no; so a wicked man, though for a while he flourisheth and overcometh all impediments that hinder him, in the eye of the world, yet at last himself and his family shall be so clean removed and swept away, his name and memory so blotted out, that there shall not be any print or foot-step of his being upon the face of the earth.

Whence note, *That the memory of wicked men shall perish for ever, none shall own them.*

If they be asked about them, they shall say, *we have not seen them. Peter* in his temptation denyed Christ, *Mat.* 27. when they asked him, saying, *Art not thou one of his Disciples?* No, saith he, *I know not the man.* As the Saints under temptation, and as hypocrites in their daily conversation deny Christ: so the time will come

when hypocrites and wicked men ſhall be denied themſelves, their places ſhall ſay, *We know them no more.* They ſhall be remembred only as *Pilate* is remembred in that which is called the Apoſtles Creed, who ſtands there upon record for his wickedneſs, cowardize and injuſtice in condemning Chriſt, whom he kn ewto be innocent. *Wicked men are either forgotten, or elſe remembred with a brand of diſgrace. They who have been adored and flattered, and crept to like little gods, ſhall not be owned by the meaneſt men.* Even their paraſites who have hung about them will fall off from them, and ſay, Who, we know them? we know no ſuch men. It is propheſied (*Zech.* 8.23.) of the Jewes who are now a deſpiſed and ſcattered people (yet ſtill a people in the heart of Chriſt) that God will bring them forth at laſt, and they ſhall be a people ſo much honoured, that *ten men out of every Nation ſhall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, ſaying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.* The deſpiſed Saints, ſuch as the world hath caſt out, and ſaid, We will not ſee or take notice of them, ſhall be honoured or envied of all; Men will be glad to take hold of their skirts, and ſay, *Come, let us go with you*; O that we might have a part and portion with you, for we know that God is with you! O that we had lived the lives, and might die the deaths of the righteous! O that our beginnings had been, and that our latter ends might be like theirs! Likewiſe a time will come, when hypocrites and wicked men ſhall be deſpiſed by their admirers, and caſt out, as not worth the looking on by their groſſeſt flatterers.

Cic *in Orat. pro Arch. poet.* It was a great honour which the *Oratour* gives *Homer*, a Heathen Poet, who was a man of ſuch reputation, that many great Cities ſtrove for him: One ſaid, he was born here; another ſaid, he was born there; a third, among us was the place of his birth. All deſired to own him, becauſe he was a man highly honoured for his learning in thoſe times. Soon the other ſide, every place ſhall be aſhamed of ſome men; this place ſhall ſay, we have nothing to do with him; and that place ſhall ſay, we have nothing to doe with him; one ſhall diſclaim him, and another ſhall diſclaim him, all ſhall refuſe him. *It ſhall be the honour of Saints to be deſired of all; and it ſhall be the ſhame and puniſhment of wicked men, to be caſt out and diſregarded by all. They who deſpiſe God, ſhall at laſt be lightly eſteemed among men.*

Bildad having thus enlarged his ſimilitude, in all the parts of it, and at laſt laid the hypocrite as low as forgetfulneſs, ſo low that no

no man will own him, as he is alwayes so low that God will not own him, he concludes triumphantly against him.

Verse 19. *Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.*

Here's his conclusion.

This is the joy.] The word which we translate *joy*, signifies the highest joy, a kind of leaping for joy. It is an allusion to doggs or spaniels, who (you know) when their Masters come home, leap about them for joy, and in their language bid them welcom. Such a joy is here meant, a joy lifting up the heart, a leaping, an exulting joy. The word is often applied to the joy of the Saints, they rejoyce, and (as it were) leap about Jesus Christ, they triumph in the favour of God. The leaping, the exulting joy, the best joy, all the joy which an hypocrite hath, is but this, which hath been described; Is it not a desirable joy? a godly joy sure? the words are ironicall, *This is the joy of his way.*

שושון *Dicitur quando gaudio gestimus, ut canes solent quando peregre advenienti Domino adulantur. En hæc est exultatio viæ ejus ironicos dictum. Hæc est lætitia qua sibi placebit in magnitudine sua. Viam appellat statum in quo erat. q.d. en quo redeat ejus gaudium dum ita se se efferret.* Merc.

Of his way.] Way is taken for the course, purpose and institution of a mans life, for the tenour of his conversation, which he holds in the world, *This is the joy of his way: This is it.* The particle is demonstrative, This is it which I have told you; as if he had said, cast up all the comfort and happiness of that flourishing tree, of the hypocrite, this is all that it comes to, his end is to be rooted up, and not so much as to be owned by those that knew him before.

There are three things which I should observe from this, *This is the joy of his way.*

First, That an hypocrite may have much joy in his way. He may rejoyce much in his condition, and think all's well. *False hopes can produce false joyes.* False faith brings forth a comfort like it self, a fading comfort, a shadow of comfort, as that is but a shadow of faith. The fancy of faith is usually fuller of joy then true faith. Satan helps forward this joy, and God for a time will not hinder it. Faith (though feigned) gives the soul a sight of such things as are worth the rejoycing in, and a supposed title to them will move joy, as well as a real title doth. The stony ground received the word with joy; the promises are delicious to the sensitive and rational part, as well as to the spirituall and regenerate part. Hence (*Heb.* 6.) they that fall away are said to have had tastes of the *joyes of the to world come.* An hypocrite may think himself in hea-

ven sometimes, and then like one in heaven, he cannot but rejoyce. *He may have a glimps of heaven upon earth, all whose heaven is earth. This is his joy.*

Secondly, *This*, may be demonstrative, and answers the question; what is his joy? It is this, His worldly comforts, his flourishing outward condition is his chiefest joy. Then note, *The joy of hypocrites is chiefly bottomed upon outward things.* It is not the joy of the Lord, no, nor joy in the Lord: *Rejoyce in the Lord, and again, I say rejoyce*, is the Gospell-command. An hypocrite cannot rejoyce thus. When he rejoyces in the Lord, somewhat besides the Lord causeth his joy. He rejoyces in his green boughs, in his goodly branches, in his supposed strong root; but to rejoyce in God as God he knows not how. *Davids* joy was the opposite of this (Psal.4.6) *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me, and that will put gladness in my heart, more then in the time that their corn and wine encreased.* Let me have the Sun-shine of thy love, and then though I have nothing but darkness and clouds from the world, I shall rejoyce. But what saith the hypocrite? let my corn and wine encrease, let the Sun of outward prosperity shine warm upon me, let me have my greenness of creature-contentments, let me have credit and fair repute among men, these will put gladness in my heart; These glad his heart, when he hath not a dram of grace or goodness there.

Thirdly, *The joy of an hypocrite is but for a moment*, It is a perishing joy. *This is the joy of his way*; you see what it amounts to, how well it lasts. His greenness is turned into withering, his root rots, and his fruit falls off. *This is his joy.* He is like those spoken of in the Epistle of *Jude* (vers.14.) *Trees twice dead, and plucked up by the roots.* That's the conclusion of the hypocrite: he hath a name to live, but he is dead, *twice dead*, naturally dead in sin, and judicially dead under wrath: he was born spiritually dead, and his whole life is a passage to eternall death. He hath rejoyced a while, but he must mourn for ever. *The portion of hypocrites is weeping and gnashing of teeth* (Mat.24.51.) Their joy is but for a morning or a day, weeping comes at night, & that night hath no morning after it.

And out of the earth shall others grow.

Some read, *Out of the earth shall somewhat else, some other thing grow:* We, out of the earth (when these are removed) other persons shall grow, who shall inherit the place, and possess the dwelling

dwelling of theſe proſperous trees. For he follows the ſimilitude of a tree; when, or where one is pulled up, another is planted and grows up in it's room. Or, others ſhall poſſeſs what he hath gotten. In which ſence *Job* ſpeaks (Chap. 27.16, 17.) *Though he heap up ſilver as the duſt, and prepare raiment as the clay, he may prepare it, but the juſt ſhall put it one, and the innocent ſhall divide the ſilver.* Which words may be a comment upon theſe, *Out of the earth ſhall others grow*; that is, others ſhall riſe up, God will bring a new generation to enjoy his ill-gotten ſubſtance, and eat the ſweet of all his Labours. *Solomon* (Eccleſ. 2. 18.) was much afflicted, becauſe he knew not who ſhould grow up after him. *I hated* (ſaith he) *all my labour which I have taken under the Sun, becauſe I ſhall leave it to a man, and I know not what he ſhall be, whether a wiſe man or a fool.* It is a part of the vanity which lyes upon man-kinde, that after all a mans labour and paines, he muſt leave all unto ſome body, he knows not certainly who. But there is a greater and ſorer vanity upon the hypocrite; he ſeldome ſtayes to take his part, *He ſhall not roſt that which he hath taken in hunting*, (*Pro.* 12.) that is, he ſhall not have the benefit himſelf of what he hath, but others (unthought of) ſhall come out of the ground and grow in his place. *This is the upſhot or ſum of all his miſery, he hath laboured for others in temporall things, and he hath got nothing for himſelf in ſpiritual things.*

Alij, qui alieni erunt ab eo, & quaſi è terra alia germinabunt, in bona ipſius ſuccedentes juxta illud, repoſitæ ſunt juſto opes peccatoris. Druſ.

Further, the words may carry this ſenſe. That

When wicked men are taken away, the righteous ſhall grow in their roome.

Pull up the bryars and thorns, and then vines and fig-trees, lilies and roſes will grow the better. When wicked men are removed, good men will proſper.

Again, *Out of the earth ſhall others grow*; they were not worth the ground they went upon, though they were worth a great deal of ground, therefore out of the ground ſhall others grow. God will raiſe up a generation which ſhall be more faithfull and ſerviceable unto him.

There is a fourth ſenſe of this expreſſion, *Out of the earth ſhall others grow*; that is, out of the meaneſt and loweſt condition others ſhall grow: and ſo it carries an oppoſition between the condition of an hypocrite, and of a godly man. The hypocrite in his flouriſhing greenneſs ſhall be cut down to the ground, but they whoſe hearts are ſincere and upright, though they are low as the ground,

ground, though they are upon the earth, and are trodden down as mire in the streets, yet they shall grow up. They who were growing high shall be cut down, and they who were below shall grow up; such as they feared not nor suspected, shall prevail over them. *They who are lowest, even as low as the earth, shall be raised, built up and set on high in the world, when God speaks the word.*

There is an Exposition of this whole context, about which (because many close with it) I shall give a brief account. Divers of the learned understand this third similitude, not as describing the state of an hypocrite, but as an instance in opposition to the state of an hypocrite, set forth by the rush and by the spider in the former verses.

Hence it is that the *Italian* version begins the sixteenth verse thus, *But the perfect man is green before the Sun*, &c, And so the sense may be given to this effect. As if *Bildad* had said, *Though hypocrites wither like a rush, or like a flag, though they are suddenly swept down like a spiders web, yet a godly man is a green tree before the Sun; he is not like a rush without water, but like a tree planted by the rivers side, which is able to endure the heat of the Sun, yea the hottest Sun of persecution:* [*His branches shoot forth in his garden*] *he is no wild tree, no tree of the forrest, or of the wilderness, he is a tree of the inclosed garden, which if it want the water from the clouds, the Gardener will take care to water it with his hand. Or* [*his roots are wrapped about the heap, about the fountain;*] *he is strongly set, and hath water continually to feed and supply his branches;* Thus the Church is so described by *Balaam* (Numb. 24. 6.) *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! as the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the rivers side, as the trees of* Lign-aloes, *which the* Lord *hath planted, and as Cedar-trees besides the waters. Thus the godly mans roots are wrapped about the fountain, and there he is fruitfull; though the Sun shine hot upon him, yet it cannot exhale his moysture faster then the river can supply him with more. And he seeth the place of stones, he will live upon a flint, having a lively root of faith continually sucking in refreshings from Christ, under whose protection and favour he remains strong and abounding in the worke of the Lord.* [*But if he destroy him from his place, it shall deny him*] *that is, if the wicked of the world attempt to root the godly man up, the place, that is, the men of the place, shall take part with him, own him, and deny to give him up into the*

hands

hands of those who would destroy him. But if the place should not secure him, if the power and violence of the enemy destroy and pluck him up, yet this is his joy, a godly man may be destroyed, but none can destroy the joy of a godly man. [*This is the joy of his way*] *he delights in persecution, he is as sorrowfull but alwayes rejoycing, even in death it self.* [*And out of his earth shall others grow*] *He shall have a blessed posterity to stand up in his stead, in whom he shall live, when he is dead. Or, if the power of the adversary root him out of his earth, in which he lived, and drive him from this ground, from house and home, he shall grow in another earth* (The originall may bear that sense.) *If he be removed from this place, he shall grow in another place; if you take him from his own Countrey, he can grow in any Countrey; and if if he be plucked from all Countries, he will grow up to, and in Heaven.*

De terra alia germinabunt. Pagn.

Thus the whole Context may be made out as a similitude of a godly man, in opposition to the hypocrite. But I rather acquiesse and settle in the interpretation before, that it is a third description of the condition of an hypocrite. The originall and our translation fairly carry it so.

Bildad having thus far prosecuted the point, vindicated the justice of God, and illustrated his former proof by a threefold similitude, shuts up and states the point for God, that *He is just, For he will not hurt the innocent, neither will he help the evill doers*, &c.

JOB, Chap. 8. Vers. 20, 21, 22,

Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man neither will he help the evil doers.
Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoycing.
They that hate thee shall be cloathed with shame, and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to naught.

THese three verses are the epilogue or close of *Bildads* discourse with *Job*: having in the former parts of the Chapter asserted, and with great clearness illustrated the justice of God in his dealings against impenitents and hypocrites; he now concludes in a mollifying language, with assurance of his favour and goodness unto those who return and humble themselves. Yet this he interweaves with threats of the displeasure of God seen in the effects of it, against the wicked, in the twentieth and two and twentieth verses.

It is, as if *Bildad* had thus said, *Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man. Job, thou maist perceive, by what hath now been spoken, that God is no enemy to the righteous, nor no friend to wicked men: Thou seest what the portion of a wicked man is from God, and how just God is in giving him such a portion; yet know, that mercy shall act as gloriously in the hand of God, as justice doth; as God is not unjust to favour hypocrites, so neither will he be unjust to forget the righteous and the perfect man: the hypocrite shall perish, but he will fill the mouth of a godly man with laughing, and his lips with rejoycing.*

Or, if we consider his speech more distinctly, we may see two negative acts of justice, one toward the perfect, the other toward the hypocrite, with the effects of both.

His justice acts towards the perfect man, in that, *He will not cast him away.* The effect whereof is, *The filling his mouth with laughing, and his lips with rejoycing.*

His justice acts against the hypocrite, thus, *He will not help the evil doers.* The effect whereof is, That *evil doers shall be clothed with shame, and that their tabernacles shall not be.*

We may cast all into a form of argument. First, to the generall, and then to the particular case of *Job.*

He

He that doth not cast away a perfect and a good man, is just and righteous in his dealings and administrations.

But God doth not, will not cast away a perfect, and a good man.

Therefore he is just and righteous in his dealings and administrations.

Then, to the particular case of *Job*.

He that doth not cast away any perfect man, will not cast thee away, if thou art perfect.

Therefore, *Job*, return, make thy way perfect before God, and *He will not cast thee away*. Or take this inference. God will not cast away a perfect man: therefore surely thou hast a great deal of imperfection or insincerity in thee, because God hath thus cast thee off, and laid thee aside.

The like arguments may be framed upon the other part of his justice, in his dealings with the wicked.

From the general sense of the Context thus given, I come to open the particulars, as they here lye in order.

Behold God will not cast away a perfect man.

Behold] Is here a strong affirmation. This is a certain truth,

God will not.

The strong God, or the puissant, *will not cast away a perfect man*. God hath infinite power, but he putteth none of it forth, to this purpose; he never layes out himself in opposing those who are perfect and righteous, *The powerful God doth not cast away a perfect man.*

אל *Deus fortis non abutitur potentia sua ad conterendum simplicem.* Pined.

Cast away.

The word which we translate, *cast away*, was opened at the 14th verse of this Chapter, and in the fifth Chapter, *vers.* 9. There it was translated by despising, *Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord*, cast not away, or cast not off the chastening of the Lord. And in the 14th verse of this Chapter, *The hypocrites hope shall be cut off*, he shall cast away his hope, or his hope should cast away and abhor him, for so the word bears. The *Seventy* translate it to that sense, *He will not cast off*; that is, he will not reprobate, or disapprove, he will not reject or discountenance a perfect man. And M. *Broughton*, *Loe, the omnipotent will not loath the perfect*. Either of the senses are full enough to the Text.

מאס *Fastidivit, reprobavit.*

Non reprobavit innocentem. 70

Mirsis. Only take notice that in the words there is a figure; for when it is said, *That God will not cast away a perfect man*; this is not all the meaning, as if God made no other reckoning of perfect men then thus, that he would not cast them away; more is intended then expresst, namely, that the Lord doth highly esteem and prize righteous men; he layes them, as it were, in his bosome and next his heart: thus the Lord deals with the righteous, *His not casting away, is a near imbracing.*

There is a two-fold casting away; First, Temporal. Secondly, Eternal: and in neither of these senses doth God cast away a perfect man. Not only shall he not perish eternally, but not temporally. He doth not reject or cast him away for a moment; his love is an everlasting love, and there can be no breaches or gaps made in it, so as to cut off his love to the person, although he often signifies displeasure against his sin.

The perfect man.

The word we had in the first Chapter, where it is used to express *Jobs* compleatness in spirituals: A compleatness, not in degrees, but in parts; sincerity fill'd up his soul, and so perfected all the limbs and members of his inward man. Observe hence,

First, *A gracious soul shall never be rejected of God.*

Whatsoever God doth in the world he will never do this, *Heb.* 13. 5. *He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* If God doth not leave a perfect man, he will not cast him away. The Apostle puts the question, (*Rom.* 11. 1.) *Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew.*

Perfect men are Gods jewels, not the rubbish or off-scouring of the world, though the world count them so. A wise man will not cast away jewels.

Perfect men are Gods servants, his faithful servants; all the willing service he hath done him in the world (on this side Angels) is done by these men. A wise man will not cast away such as are truly serviceable un tohim.

Perfect men are Gods children; they are born of God, and sons of the most high. Natural love will not cast away a child.

Perfect men are Gods portion, the lot of his inheritance, his revenue

revenue comes in, he hath his incomes of glory, by them. A man will not despise his own glory, he will not reject his own inheritance.

Further, they who are perfect come to him in his Son; and he hath pawned his truth for it (*John 6. 37.*) *He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*: As if he had said, this thing is furthest from my heart of any thing in the world. God calls after many who goe away from him, but he casts away none who come to him. None come to him till he draws them, therefore he will not drive them away who come.

Again, Perfect men have the Spirit of God. God cannot cast away or stop his ears at the voice of his own Spirit. They have the earnest of his Spirit; if God should go about to put them off, or lay them aside, they would shew God those tokens and pledges of his love, the earnest he hath given them to assure their hearts.

Lastly, He hath tied himself to them in the bond of a Covenant, they are fast to him in the everlasting bonds of his own love; therefore they cannot be cast off. So he promises his people (*Levit. 26. 44.*) though they should provoke him to afflict them, yet he would not reject them utterly; he might put them into the hand of their enemies, but he would never cease to be their friend, *For all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away.* (Many think when the Saints are cast into trouble, that God hath cast them away: no, there is no such matter, when they are in their enemies hand, God holds them still in his hand, yea, in his heart.) *I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my Covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God.* The Covenant holdeth God and his people so fast together, that they shall never part.

We find the Church complaining greivously, as if she were cast away (Psal. 44.9.) *Thou hast cast us off and put us to shame, and goest not forth with our Armies*: and verse 23. the Church prayes, *Arise, O Lord, cast us not off for ever.* So (*Psal. 60. 1.*) *O God, thou hast cast us off*: and verse 9. *Who will bring me into the strong City? Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off?* God (to sense) casts off his own people, when he casteth them into dangers: but even then their faith takes hold of God, and Gods love takes hold of them. Though all this be come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, nor dealt falsly in thy Covenant (*Psal. 44. 17.*) neither

had God forgotten them, or dealt falsly in the Covenant: they were his people still, and as near unto him, as when they were furthest from those troubles.

God casts away some indeed, but they are such as he never had within the bonds of his Covenant. He casts away wicked men, as rubbish, as filth and dirt; such the Prophet speaks of (*Hos.* 9. 15.) *My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him.* These were imperfect, not perfect men. God casts these away, not from any interest they had in him, but because they never had any. Such as will not hearken unto the word of God, God will cast away; why? they cast God away, when they cast the Word of God away. They cast the Covenant behind their backs (*Psal.* 50.) no wonder God casts them behind his back; he throws them out of doors, when they throw his truth out of their hearts. Perfect men love the truth of God for ever, and the God of truth loves them for ever.

Secondly, (For as was said, these words express less then is meant.) Observe,

That perfect men are highly esteemed by God.

He prizes them greatly, he delighteth in them, *They that honour me, I will honour*, saith God; not only will I not cast them away, or abhor them, but I will honour them. God esteems and prizes them, though the world disesteem and reject them. There is many a soul which the world tramples under their feet, as the mire in the streets, which at that time God layes in his bosome. Christ imbraceth some in his arms, whom the world, yea, whom their brethren hate, and smite with tongues (Isa. 66. 5.) *Your Brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my Names sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified* (Not only the wicked world may do this, but brethren, even those that are brethren indeed, in the main, may possibly hate a perfect man, and cast him out) your brethren that hated you, and cast you out for my Names sake; but the Lord at that time loved them, as it follows, *But he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.*

And if God doth not only not cast away perfect ones, but esteem them, then take these three cautions.

First, Ye that are perfect, be sure ye keep close to God, doe not cast him off; do not cast away the word, any one truth or command of God. Cast not the wayes of God away, for he will never cast you away.

Secondly,

Secondly, Ye that are perfect, *Cast not away your confidence*, Heb. 10. 35. The Apostle had shewed how close God would stick to his people; now, saith he, it if be so, if he will bring his promises to pass, *then cast not away your confidence*. There is a great strength of engagement in it, when we read that God will not cast away his people, that they should not cast away their confidence in God, *which hath great recompence of reward*.

Thirdly to all, take heed of casting off or sleighting any perfect man; we should act towards men, and think of them as God doth. It is best to love where God loves, and to love most where he loves most. *Negative promises, and negative threatnings, have greatest force in them.* God holds them fastest, and loves them dearest, of whom he saith, I will not cast them away. *God will not cast away a perfect man.* There's a negative promise. Now see the portion of the wicked, that's given out in a negative threatning: God saith not what he will do against them, but what he will not do for them, *Neither will he help the evil doers.*

He will not help them.

Some read it, *He will not put forth his hand to evil doers*. So the letter of the Hebrew imports. And there may be a three-fold sense given of that reading. *Putting forth the hand*, notes, first, our taking men into society, fellowship, and familiarity with us: when we would shew a man how we love him at our hearts, we put forth a hand, and take him by the hand. Now (saith he) God will not take an evil doer by the hand, to welcome or entertain him, to countenance and respect him (Exod. 23. 1.) *Put not thy hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness*: Be not of the same side, communion and fellowship with him, in giving witness.

Non porrigit manum malignis. Vulg. *Ad amicitiæ fœdus pertinere videtur.*

Secondly, (As the Septuagint gives the sense) *He will not put forth his hand*; that is, to receive a gift or an offering from wicked men. When a gift or a present is brought, the receiver (if he would testifie his liking and acceptance of it) puts forth his hand and receives it. Now (saith *Bildad*) *God will not put forth his hand* to receive any offering or gift from wicked men; the oblations of wicked men are an abomination unto the Lord, *The good deeds of evil doers are evil in his sight. He had no respect to Cain and his offering*. He did not put forth his hand to receive *Cains* offering, but he put forth his hand to receive *Abels* offering. This is a profitable sense.

Nec ullum munus impij accipiet. Sept. q d. *Non porriget manus, accepturus munus impiorum dona non sunt Deo grata.* Pined.

Thirdly,

יחזק
Denotat fortiter apprehendere, aut potius apprehendendo corfortare, & roborare, hoc est præstare auxilium. Improbis non favet nec eos juvat. Merc.

Thirdly, It rather refers to Gods not assisting wicked men. So Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *He will not maintain the hand of the mischievous.* To put forth or stretch out the hand, according to this Hebrew phrase, implies strong holding, or the taking of strong hold upon any thing, so as by taking hold of it to strengthen and confirm it, to give it help and assistance. A man that would give assistance to another in any business or work, puts forth his hand to him. When we want help, we usually bespeak a friend, *Pray lend me your hand.* Now here, *The Lord will not put forth his hand to evil doers*; that is, the Lord gives them no assistance or help in their wickedness. If wicked men say, Lord, *lend us thy hand*: no, saith he, I will not lend you my hand. We find this phrase frequent in Scripture. That (*Gen.* 19.16.) illustrates it fully; where Lot being warned to go out of *Sodome* (verse 16.) *while he lingred the men* (that is, the Angels) *laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the* Lord *being merciful unto him, and they brought him forth, & set him without the City.* They laid hold upon their hands: It is the word of the text. When the Lord sees wicked men, in any distress or danger (as Lot was in *Sodome*) or when they want help and assistance in any business, he will not be merciful to them in taking them by the hand, or in laying his hand strongly upon them, either to pull them out of the danger, or to give them help in difficulties. The sin of *Jerusalem* is charged upon her in this language by the Prophet, in a parity with that of filthy *Sodome* (Ezek. 16.49.) *Neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy*: that is, she did not relieve, comfort, or help them. The sin opposite to this is charged upon the false Prophets by *Jeremiah* (Chap. 23.14.) *They strengthen the hands of evil doers*, either by counsel, or by countenance, by flatteries or connivance. We read (*Nehem.* 6.) how often the enemies sent false alarms to *Nehemiah*, and the people that were with him, to terrifie and affright them: *Nehemiah* shewes the enemies design in it, vers. 9. *They all made us afraid, saying, their hands shall be weakned from the work that it be not done*; therefore in the close *Nehemiah* prayes, *Lord strengthen mine hands* (it is this word) as if he had said, *Lord, help me, put thine hands to mine.* So (Isa. 35.3. *strengthen the weak hands*, put your hands to their hands, *Psal.* 73.23. *David* acknowledging how he had almost fallen at the rising of the wicked, shews yet what kept him up, *Nevertheless, I am continually with thee, thou hast holden me by my right hand*: the hand

had of providence is the power of God upholding our being, as the hand of Creation was the power of God giving us our being, Isa. 42. 6. *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand and help thee.* So, *Isa.* 41. 13. that is, by holding of thine hand I will help thee. The same word in the original is used for hardening the heart (*Exod.* 9. 12.) because hardness of heart strengthens it to do evil. A hard heart is armed for any sin. חזק לב

So then we see, when the Lord refuseth to put forth his hand, or to take strong hold (as the word imports) upon the hand of evil men, the meaning lies in one of these three things,

1. That he bears no favour to them, he doth not approve their cause or business.

2. That he gives them no assistance nor encouragement in their business.

3. That he will not deliver or rescue them out of their distresses; when they are sinking and falling he will not put forth his hand to hold them up, or to keep them from sinking. God is not a Patron nor a Protector, an Adjutor or Aider of evil doers.

Evil doers.

We must not take these evil doers for all and every one that doth evil, *for then whom would God help?* We may then say (with reverence) *God help us* indeed; what a miserable condition were we then in, if God would not put forth his hand to help any that do evil? The evil doer is a man notoriously, professedly, studiously wicked, one that acts and devises evil against God and his wayes. Every one who doth evil is not to be reckon'd an evil doer. A man doth evil in any one act: but one act doth not make him an evil doer. A Magistrate must count him an evil doer, who doth evil; and therefore he must take vengeance (in many cases) *of him that doth evil* (though but once) *Rom.* 13. 4. and though he repent. The Angels were cast as evil doers for one act, and so was man in innocency: but now the evil doer is one who multiplies and continues in evil deeds; to such as these the Lord will not put forth his hand, or give them his help. Observe then, מרעים

First, *That God is no friend, no assistant unto men in sinful wayes.*

He will not strengthen the hands, or help forward the work of wicked men. God is the punisher and judge of evil doers, therefore not their helper.

Evil

Evil doers oppose not only Gods law, but his nature, therefore he will not help them. He cannot exercise one Attribute against another; his power will not work against his holiness, or against his will.

There is a two-fold help which God giveth.

First, A common help.

Secondly, A special help.

We grant that God strengthens the hands even of evil doers in regard of a common help: For no man could put forth his hand to any evil, as a sinner, if God did not give him a general assistance, as a creature. In this sense the strength by which men rebel and sin against God, comes from God. But he doth not strengthen their hands, or give them help by any special assistance. In the doing of good, we have a common assistance to the act, as there is a natural motion in it, which God gives his people with the rest of the world: but this will not carry them out to do good compleatly. To bring forth any gracious act, they must have a special assistance. Hence Christ saith, *Without me ye can do nothing*, he means it not of that general support which Christ gives to man, by which *all live and move, and have their being in him* (in that sense no man is able to do any thing without Christ, for in him all things consist) but when he saith, *without me ye can do nothing*, he means, without my special assistance and strength ye cannot perform holy and spiritual duties, acceptable unto God. So the Apostle, *We have no sufficiency of our selves, so much as to think a good thought.* We have no sufficiency to think any thought without some assistance; but to think a good thought, we have not any sufficiency without a special assistance. Wicked men are not able to do evil without a common assistance; but they have no special assistance from God to do evil. He doth neither stir up and excite their lusts to the act, nor supply their lusts while they are acting. Wicked men have assistance enough in both from their own hearts, and from Satan. Though man hath no sufficiency in himself to think one good thought, yet he hath a sufficiency in himself to think all evil thoughts; as he is a creature he acts, and as he is a corrupt creature he sins. Man hath full power and free-will to do evil, therefore the Lord doth not put forth his hand to help the evil doer.

But it will be necessary for the understanding of this and other like Scriptures, to consider somewhat more distinctly, what God doth in reference to evil acts, or the acts of evil doers. He concurs,

curs, but not with such a concurrence, as amounts to the helping of evil doers, or the strengthening of their hands.

The first help which God gives evil doers, is privative, or negative; the calling in, or not giving out of that power, by which they might do good or avoid evil. Thus he departed from *Saul*, & then *Saul* went on, worse and worse, against *David*. God hath somewhat to doe with evil doers, when he with-draws that help from them, by which they might be kept from doing evil: Or, when he doth not assist them against the evil of their own hearts, and the pollutions of the world. This deserting and leaving them unto themselves, layes them open to sin. Yet the sin which a man thus deserted commits, can no more be charged upon God, then the darkness of the night can be charged upon the Sun for going down; sin follows divine desertion, not as an effect doth the cause, but as a consequent doth it's antecedent.

Secondly, He delivers or gives them up, first, to Satan: And secondly, to their own counsels, to a reprobate minde and vile affections, *Psal.* 31. 12. *Rom.* 1. 24, 26. This tradition is an act beyond desertion; there is a greater spiritual judgement in it, when God makes a mans own wickedness active against him, then when he doth not make his Spirit or grace active in him. It were better to be put into the hands of all the tyrants in the world, yea, better be put into the hands of the devil, then into the hands of our own lusts and passions. *God doth not give a reprobate minde or vile affections, but he gives up to them.*

Thirdly, Evil doers in their doing evil are ordered by God. Wicked men (in every sinfull act) run beyond the line of obedience, but they cannot run beyond the line of providence. God limits and circumscribes the acts of wicked men, for otherwise every wicked man would be a *monster*, *a none-such* in wickedness, if he could; every one would be a *Cain*, an *Ahab*, a *Nero*, a *Caligula*, &c. The sinfulness of men would be, not only out of measure sinfull *intensivè*, in regard of the quality of it, but out of measure sinfull *extensivè*, in regard of the quantity of it, it would break all bounds, carry all down before it, did not the Lord order and direct the disorders and confusions of it. There is a sea of wickedness in the heart of a wicked man, which is as boysterous and unruly as the natural sea; and if the Lord did not set bounds to that sea of wickedness, and say, *Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further*, it would overwhelm all. Thus far also God hath to doe in the

sinfulness of men, to limit and stay them, to restrain and keep them in compass while they sin. Every sin goes without the compass of that law which God hath given, but no sin can get beyond the compass of that leave which God gives.

Fourthly, We may say, *God assists the motions of sin, but not the motions to sin, or the sinfullness of the motion.* The strength of a wicked mans hand, while he sins, is from the Lord, but the Lord doth not strengthen his hand to sin. A sinner hath naturall help from God, but he hath no morall help from God; he hath all that from himself, from his own wicked heart, or from Satan. To eat was a naturall act in our first parents, this was from God: but to eat against the command was a morall act, and that was from man and the serpent. As suppose that a Musitian should touch or play upon a Lute that is out of tune, his touching the Lute is an artificial act, but the sounding of it comes from the nature of the instrument: the sounding of the instrument is from the hand of him that plaies upon it, but, that it sounds untuneably, is, because the instrument is out of tune. So the Lord by naturall assistance puts the hearts and hands of wicked men into motion, but that they move irregularly, that they make such harsh musick, that there is so much discord in their actions, that's from the disorder and untuneableness of their own spirits, not from the hand of God. They have not any morall assistance from God in sin, but a naturall only.

Or, take it negatively, *God doth not help the evil doers.*

First, He doth not help the evil doers, by instilling the least motion of evil into them. He casts in, or infuses holy thoughts and motions into the hearts of his own people, to prepare them for holy performances, but he never dropt the least motion of evil into the heart of man, to fit him for wickedness.

Secondly, The Lord doth not excite or stir up that naturall inherent corruption that is in wicked men; he doth not provoke or blow up their lusts. He excites the graces of his own people, when they are to doe any good: they have a principle of grace in them, and this God breaths upon, moving and acting it by fresh assistances. Neither of these wayes doth the Lord assist evil doers.

Further, Taking the words (as they must) in a figure, when it is said, *God doth not help the evil doers*; the meaning is, he doth oppose and resist them. Hence observe,

Wicked men are resisted and opposed by God in their evil doings.

God

God is ſo far from giving them any help, that he ſets himſelf againſt them. Underſtand this with a diſtinction.

There is a two-fold reſiſtance or oppoſition that God makes againſt the evil doings of men. There is,

1. A morall
2. A naturall } oppoſition.

Or there is,

1. A declarative
2. An operative } reſiſtance.

When it is ſaid, that God doth reſiſt (as this phraſe imports or ſuppoſeth) wicked men in doing evil, we are to underſtand it, that he ever oppoſes them morally; that is, he ever layes a moral impediment in their way, and he ever oppoſes them declaratively, he declares his oppoſition in his Word. He never ſhews the leaſt liking of wicked men in their wayes. For when he ſaith, *He that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill; and he that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill,* (Rev. 22. 11.) he doth not at all approve, but threatens theſe ſinners. This ſeeming admiſſion is the higheſt rebuke of ſin. But take it for a naturall oppoſition, which is the bringing out of ſtrength and power to ſtop men in the wayes of ſin: Thus the Lord doth not alwayes reſiſt evil doers. For if he did, it were impoſſible that any wicked man ſhould move one hairs bredth in doing evil; if God would put forth his power againſt man, he could not ſtir to ſin againſt God: but God doth not ſo, neither is he bound to lay a naturall impediment in the wayes of wicked men. It is enough to acquit him in his holineſs, that he ever layes a morall impediment in their way. He declareth his law againſt, and his diſlike of their ſins: and in this ſenſe he alwayes reſiſts them. All the ſin of man is againſt the will of God, yet no man ſins whether God will or no. The declarative will of God is often reſiſted, but his operative will cannot be reſiſted. As (which may illuſtrate this) in the civil State, the laws of this Kingdome lay a moral impediment in the way of thievery and robbery, *&c.* It is perpetually declared by the law, that no man ought to take another mans eſtate from him violently; but yet the Kingdome doth not ever ſet a natural impediment againſt robbers, *&c.* That is, we doe not place a power of men to guard all high wayes or houſes, to ſee that no paſſenger ſhall be robbed, or houſe broken open: So the Lord layes a moral impediment in the way of wicked men alwayes, but he doth not alwayes ſet his power againſt them, whereby he is able

(if he pleaſe) to diſable wicked men from doing evil. Thirdly, Obſerve,

When wicked men are going down, down they ſhall.

Why? God will not put forth his hand to help them; they whom God will not aſſiſt or help, cannot ſtand long. They in the Pſalm thought they had got a godly man at an advantage, *Come* (ſay they) *let us perſecute and take him, for God hath forſaken him, and there is none to deliver him*; Now we have our wills of this man, for God ſtands by and doth not own him. If God be a neuter, his friends cannot ſtand long, how then ſhall his enemies ſtand, when he is their oppoſer? We may conclude againſt wicked men, that they ſhall be deſtroyed, for God hath forſaken them, he will not own them; and as *Hamans* wife told him ſadly, *Eſt.6.13. If Mordecai be of the ſeed of the Jews, before whom thou haſt begun to fall, thou ſhalt ſurely fall before him.* When a man is going down, nothing can ſtay him, if God doe not: his hand muſt ſupport a ſinking and tottering perſon or Nation, or elſe either falls. When wicked enemies begin to fall, they ſhall fall and periſh, for God will not put forth his hand to help the evil doers.

Now follows the effect of all. The effect firſt of Gods gracious helping of the righteous, *He will not caſt away the righteous man*; and is that all? Shall a righteous man be only not rejected? As mans duty ought not, ſo the mercy of God doth not ſtay in negatives. The Lord hath poſitive bleſſings in ſtore for his people; the latter part of the promiſe affirms this, *He will not caſt away the righteous man.*

Verſe 21. *Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoycing.*

Till he fill thy mouth with laughing.] And is it but juſt till then? Will the Lord when he hath ſet his people alaughing, leave them and help them no more? Will he, when he hath given them cauſe of joy, caſt them off? His people had better never laugh at all, then laugh upon theſe terms. No man can laugh long, nor at all, (upon any due ground) if God leave him.

Particula, donec, non ſignificat poſtea projiciendum eſſe Deo ſimplicem, ſed quod immutabiliter ſervabitur à Deo.

We are not to underſtand this [*Till*] to be a *terminative*, or a *determinative* particle, as if the Lords care and favour towards his people, ſhould be only till he put them in a good eſtate, and then they muſt ſhift for themſelves. God puts no ſuch limits to his love. *It cannot ſo much comfort the ſoul to know God loves us now, as it would*

would trouble the ſoul, to think a time may come when he will not love us. The [*till*] here notes a continued act; it is as much as to ſay, *He will never caſt them off.* The word [*untill*] both in the Hebrew and Greek, often notes everlaſtingneſs. God makes a promiſe to *Jacob* in this form, (*Gen.* 28.19.) *I will not leave thee, untill I have done that which I have ſpoken to thee of.* And would he leave him then? No, the meaning is, I will never leave thee (*Pſa.* 110.1.) *Sit thou on my right hand untill I make my enemies thy footſtool.* Chriſt ſhall not be put from the right hand of God when his enemies are ſubdued under his feet, Chriſt ſhall ſit there for ever.

Till he fill thy mouth with laughing.

Thy mouth.] Obſerve here the change of the perſon: he ſpake before in the third perſon, *The Lord will not caſt away the perfect man*, now he brings it home and applies it unto *Job*, *Till he fill thy mouth with laughing*; as if he had ſaid, That which I ſpake in the third perſon, I meant it as appliable unto thy ſelf, that general truth may be made good to thy perſon, *Till he fill thy mouth.* I doe not ſpeak ſpeculations or fleeing notions of things that ſhall never come to paſs; If thou follow my counſell, thy own experience will quickly teach thee, *That God will not caſt thee off, till he fill thy mouth with laughing.*

Hoc quod dixi in tantum verum eſt, ut in te ſentiens. Aquin.

Laughter is an act of joy flowing from reaſon. To *fill the mouth with laughing* notes great joy, ſuch an income of joy, ſo much matter of joy, that the heart cannot hold it, but out it muſt at the mouth: joy begins at the heart, there's the ſeat of it: and when the heart is ſo full of it that it cannot hold, then it runs over at the mouth and lips; that is, we expreſſe inward joy of the heart by ſome outward ſign or token, ſpeech or geſture. So then, to ſay, *I will not caſt thee away, til I have filled thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoycing*, is as much as to ſay, *I* will not leave thee, till thou haſt more comfort then thine heart can hold, ſo much, that thou muſt give it vent at thy lips, and be ſpeaking of it.

Os impleri dicitur riſu, cum aliquis tanta animi hilaritate perfruitur, ut illa cordis hilaritas per vociferationem conclamationem riſum aut hujuſmodi exteriora ſigna valde appareat. Bold.

The word for *laughter* ſignifies as well inward as outward joy, heart-laughter as well as face-laughter. Beſides, there is a two-fold laughter.

Firſt, a laughing for joy. And

Secondly, A laughing of ſcorn, called *ſubſannation.* With both theſe laughters the Lord will fill the mouths of his people.

Firſt, With laughing for joy: for at their own comfortable

and good estate, for joy that the Lord hath glorified himself in their deliverance. These things are great matter of joy to them. And then he will fill their mouths with a laughing of derision, they shall scorne their enemies who have scorned at them. God laughs at the proud opposers of his truth and people, Psa. 2. *He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision.* When the Lord hath confounded the plots of his enemies, he laugheth at them; his people also shall laugh, not insulting in the sins and miseries of men, but in the vengeance and disappointments which God poureth upon them. *The derisions and scorns of the Saints have more holiness in them, then the devotions and prayers of wicked men.* The word in the Next clause is considerable.

And thy lips with rejoycing.

רועה
a radice
רוע
Personavit, vociferatus est, vocem magnam edidit.

We translate *rejoycing*, but the word properly signifies *a joyfull sound*. So it is used (Psal. 89. 15.) *Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound.* And it signifies to make a joyfull sound, either with the mouth, which is a natural instrument, or with a trumpet or any other artificial instrument. *Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound*, that live within the sound of the silver trumpet which congregated the people of God, and gave notice of their solemn meetings for publick worship. This word is applied somtimes to that rude sound, or confused noise, which souldiers make when they come on to charge in battell; they commonly make a great clamour, to strike the adversary with terrour and amazement, and to encourage and raise their own spirits. The Greeks and Latins have their speciall terms to express it by, noted by the learned in the proprieties of those languages.

ἀλαλάζειν est lætum clamorem tollere, ut solent homines fiducia præditi & spe erecti, ut milites ante prælium. Latini Barritum vocant, clamour quem Barritum vocant, non prius debet attolli quam acies rei quisse junxerit. Veget.

Again, That word is used for the confused noise of worsted or conquer'd enemies, when they flee and run away. So (*Judg.* 7. 21.) when *Gideon* had discomfited the host of the *Amalekites*, all the host *ran and cryed*, they made a dolefull sound: so the word beares, as well as a joyfull sound.

Thirdly, The word is chiefly used to note the sound or acclamation of souldiers after victory is obtained; a prevailing army shouts when the adverse forces are routed and overcome. Thus, in that famous instance (*Josh.* 6. 5.) *Joshua* gives command, that when they make a long blast with the rams horns, and when they heard the sound of the trumpet, all the people should *shout with a great shout*. Which shout is expressed by the word of the text, and in the tenth

verse

verse he charges that they should not shout or make a noise with their voice till the seventh day, because that was designed for the day of victory, the day when the wall should fall: *You shall not shout nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouths, till the day I bid you shout, then shall ye shout.* *Balaam* (Numb. 23. 21.) confesses he could not curse *Israel*, because *the shout of a King was amongst them.* It is this word. That shout of a King may be understood three wayes.

First, That it was a shout as Kings used to have in their reception and coronation; Such a shout, saith he, there is among this people, as if a King were to be received and crowned. Thus when *Samuel* brought *Saul* out, whom he had annointed for King and said, *See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the King*, 1 Sam. 10. 24.

Or secondly, It noteth such a shout as is in an army, where a King in person is a leader or victour.

Thirdly, The shout of a King is amongst them, because the voice of a King should be as the sound of a Trumpet, or some loud instrument, to inform and direct his people, as also to encourage them.

From all, we see this rejoycing is no ordinary joy; it is a high, a triumphant joy, *I will fill thy lips with rejoycing, till thou shalt sing VICTORIA over all thine enemies and calamities.*

Further, This also is in it, a rejoycing with praise: not a bare rejoycing in the blessings and deliverances, but a rejoycing in the praises of God, who hath given those blessings, and wrought those deliverances. The Septuagint translate it by rendring of thanks, or a confession of praise, *I will not cast thee away, till I have filled thy lips with rejoycing*; that is, with my praises. Thus *David* prayes (*Psal.* 71. 8.) *Let my mouth be filled with thy praise, and with thine honour all the day long.* Praise filling the heart fils the mouth; joy as well as sorrow pent up, stifles the Spirit. Hence we may observe,

ἐξομολογήσεως, i. e. confessio et laudis & gratiarum actionis pro accepta restitutaque felicitate.

First, *That as joy is the portion of the people of God, so in good time they shall receive their portion.*

He will not cast off a perfect man, till he fill his mouth with joy, and his lips with rejoycing. Joy is their due, and joy they shall have. Hereafter they shall have their *Masters joy*, *Enter into your Masters joy*, will Christ say at last. Now they shall have such a joy as befits them, whilst they are in their Masters service. And as rejoycing is the portion, so the proper portion, the peculiar of godly men.

men. Though laughing, as it is a natural act, is common to all men, yet in the sense we speak of, laughter is appropriated unto godly and perfect men: *They only can laugh indeed, who have mourned indeed.* A wicked man doth but feign a laugh. *He laughs to thee and to me, but he doth not laugh to himself:* He hath no true laughter, while he laughs. His laughter is madness, and proceeds from his ignorance, not from his reason. Besides other marks of difference which shall be put between the servants of God and their enemies, this is one, *My servants shall rejoyce, and ye shall be ashamed* (Isa. 65. 13.) This joy arises two wayes.

Tibi videt & nobi, non sibi.

First, From the greatness of the blessing, which they receive for themselves. We must rejoyce in the least mercy, how greatly then in the greatest? Our joyes take their measure by our mercies. When *Sarah* had a Son, she said, *God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear me shall laugh with me*, Gen. 21. 6. Her mercy in receiving a son was so great, that it would serve a whole world to make merry with. The man that had found his lost sheep, *laid it on his shoulders, rejoycing*, (it was a pleasant burden to him) *and when he came home, he called together his friends and neighbours, saying, Rejoyce with me* (Luk. 15. 6.) As some afflictions are so big, that all our own sorrows are not large enough to weep and mourn over them: so some blessings are so big, that they call out more then our own affections to rejoyce over them.

Secondly, This overflowing joy arises from the greatness of those judgments, which are poured out upon the enemies of the Saints. The overthrow of *Pharaoh* at the red sea, of *Jabin*, and *Sisera* at the brook *Kishon*, filled all hearts and mouths with laughter, and so shall the overthrow of *Babylon*, Rev. 15.

Thus, when God doth great things for his people, and great things against his enemies, then it is time to rejoyce greatly (*Psal.* 126. 1.) *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoyce*, say the captive Jewes in the morning or first dawnings of their deliverance from *Babylon:* and more then so, *Then was our mouth fill'd with laughter, and our tongue with singing.* And there is cause of great rejoycing in those great things, because then God fulfils his promises, & makes his Name glorious in his providences. Then God is greatly honoured, when his people are greatly delivered; then the blasphemies of wicked men are unanswerably confuted, and their mouths for ever stopped. From all these considerations the hearts of the Saints are filled with laughter, and their mouths with

rejoycing,

rejoycing in a day when God works great things. At such times joy, and this degree of it, is not only our priviledge, but our duty. When we carry a message of thanks to God, we must not come with unchearful countenances, or sowr faces. It is a comely thing, when our affections keep time and proportion with the dispensations of God. When we cannot sing the songs of *Sion*, or use our harps by the waters of *Babylon*, and when we cannot but sing either in the restoring of *Sion*, or in the ruines of *Babylon*.

Some may object those texts, *Woe to them that laugh*, &c. (*Lu* 6. 25.) It seems laughter is the portion of wicked men, for woe (we are sure) is their portion. It's true, worldly laughter, a laughter in corn and wine, and oyl, a laughter in riches, and honours, and carnal pleasures, as such, is a laughter with a woe annexed. But to laugh in the sense of the goodness of God, giving us outward good things to express our selves joyfully, when God expresses himself graciously, is not only comely, but holy. When Gods heart comes out at his hand, and is seen in his actions, our hearts should come out at our mouths, and be heard in our exultations.

Thus we have seen the effect of the goodness of God upon his own people. See the effects of his justice upon wicked men.

Verse 22. *They that hate thee shall be cloathed with shame, and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.*

God resists, or will not put forth his hand to evil doers, then follows, *They shall be brought to shame*. Shame is opposite to laughing; he that rejoyceth, usually holds up his head, and cares not who sees him; but he that is ashamed, holds down his head, and endures not to be seen. Some men laugh in their sleeves (as we say) but all men would be ashamed in their sleeves.

They that hate thee.

שנא

Odio habuit, contempsit. Dicitur etiam aliquando per comparationem alterius, quod magis amatur, non quod propriè odio habeatur. Rab.

The word hath a double signification.

First, It imports the putting forth of bitter hatred, when a man sets himself maliciously against his brother.

Secondly, It is taken comparatively, for a lesser or more remiss putting forth of love. He may be said to hate who wants a due heat and height of love. In that sense *Jacob* was taxed for hating *Leah*, Gen. 29. 31. *When the Lord saw that Leah was hated*, &c. Take hatred in the common notion, and then surely *Jacob* was not

a *Dav. in l. Rad.*

a man so forgetful of a husbands duty, as to hate his wife: the meaning then is only this, *The Lord saw that Leah had a less portion of love then Rachel had, or less then her conjugal relation called for.* *Jacob* did not love her with that strength of affection with which he loved *Rachel.* Which exposition is clear vers. 30. *)and he(* namely *Jacob) loved Rachel more then Leah*; then, *Leah* was loved, yet *Jacobs* loving of *Rachel* more then *Leah*, is called, hating of *Leah.* *Not to love another in that degree we ought, is a degree of hatred.* And in this sense we may take it here; for though such as maliciously, and professedly set themselves against the righteous are chiefly intended and fitted for this vesture of shame; yet it is cut out also for them, who do not love and esteem the righteous, who do not prize and rejoyce in them, as the beauty and dignity which Christ hath put upon them, invites them to do. These haters *shall be cloathed with shame*; according to the degree of their hatred shall be the degree of their shame.

They shall be cloathed with shame.

בושׁה *à radice* בושׁ *Pudu taliquem rei vel facti.* Our English word *abasht* is as near it in sound as in sense.

To be ashamed at all is a great punishment; what is it then to be cloathed with shame? To be cloathed with shame is a great punishment, and most proper for those who are proud of their cloathing.

Shame is the fruit of sin. When there was no sin in the world, there was no shame in the world, *The man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.* Innocency knew no shame, and glory shall know none. It is good to be ashamed when we have done evil, but it is best to do no evil, whereof to be ashamed. *Shame is a perturbation or trouble of mind, expressed outwardly by holding down the head, or by blushing in the face.* And it ariseth three wayes.

1. From doing somewhat against common light: though every act of evil hath matter of shame in it, yet a man is not naturally ashamed of it, unless it be done against the light of nature. Not to be ashamed of such sins, is to put out the light of nature: Such men are grown down into beasts. The impudence of *Jerusalem* is set forth in sinning against the light of Scripture without blushing, *Isa.* 3. 9. *Were they at all ashamed?* Some are so modest, that they are ashamed to hear of, much more to be praised for the good which they have done: Others are so impudent, that they are not ashamed to hear of, no, nor to be reproved for, the evil which they have

have done, *Were they at all ashamed?* As if he had said, what a boldness or impudence is this people come to, they are not ashamed of those things which are clearly forbidden in the Word. *A good man is ashamed of any thing he hath done against the light of Scripture. Every man is ashamed of what he doth against the light of nature.*

2. Shame arises from long delay, or detainments much beyond expectation. When *Moses* staid long in the Mount, *the people were ashamed* (Exod. 32. 1.) So *Judg.* 3. 25. when *Eglon* staid long in the inner parlour, the text saith, his servants, who waited without, were ashamed.

3. Shame ariseth from utter disappointments. If hope deferred causeth shame, then much more hope destroyed. When a man sees his hopes quite cut off, so that he can no way reach the thing he looked for, shame takes hold of him strongly. *David* prayes *(*Psal. 119. 116.*) Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live, and let me not be ashamed of my hope*; that is, let me not lose my hope, for then I shall be ashamed; my enemies will rejoyce and hoot at me, where's the word upon which you trusted to be upholden? Read *Isa.* 19. 9. *Psal.* 27. 6. *Psal.* 119. 116. In all which Scriptures we find shame following the total frustration and disappointment of hope.

Evil doers shall be ashamed upon these three grounds. They have done things against common light. They shall stay waiting and gaping long for what they desire. They shall see themselves totally disappointed and defeated in their desires; hence shame shall fill their faces, and they shall be covered with it as with a garment.

Here is more then bare shame waiting upon them, the text saith, *They shall be cloathed with shame.* To be cloathed is applyed both to ornament and dishonour. There are three degrees of expression in Scripture about shame.

1. Barely to be *ashamed*, that's the lowest.

2. To have the face covered with shame; *Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake. Because for thy sake I have born reproach, shame hath covered my face* (Psal. 69. 6, 7.) The Prophet complains, that his face was covered with shame; his enemies endeavoured to blot and asperse him, they poured contempt and reproaches upon his face, that is, upon his reputation in the world (to do so is to cover the face with shame) there-

fore he prayes, *Let not thoſe that wait on thee be confounded for my ſake.* Lord, they have covered me with ſhame, but do thou vindicate my reputation and mine honour; let not them that wait on thee be aſhamed for my ſake, becauſe I have had ſhame upon me for thy ſake: that is, let not any be diſcouraged in thy ſervice, through my ſufferings. The Apoſtle feared ſome would faint, becauſe of his tribulations, *Eph.* 3. 13.

Indui confuſione eſt Hebraiſmus, quo exprimitur omnimoda conjundens verecundia. Bold.

3. *To be cloathed with ſhame*, which implyes the whole man under a covering of diſgrace. Some are ſo cloathed with ſin, that their very cloaths are aſhamed of them, being unwilling to touch or hide ſuch ſins. *Job* ſpeaks that ſenſe in the ninth Chapter (*verſe* 31.) concerning his own righteouſneſs in juſtification, *If I waſh my ſelf with ſnow-water, and make my hands never ſo clean, yet thou wilt plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths ſhall abhor me*; that is, if I ſhould ſet my ſelf up in my own righteouſneſs, my own cloaths would be loth to cover ſuch a piece of ſpiritual pride, as that act would witneſs me to be.

Veſtimenta dicuntur abominari, quaſi maculam contrahere timentes.

To be cloathed with ſhame notes four things.

First, The extent or abundance of it. To be cloathed with honour, is to have much honour. To be cloathed with humility, is to be very humble (1 *Pet.* 5. 5.) He that is cloathed is covered all over with his cloathing.

Manifeſtè confundentur. Aqu.

Secondly, The publickneſs of it, that ſhame cannot be hid. A man cannot go abroad but his cloathing is ſeen: the filthineſs which lies underneath may be hid, but his cloathing cannot. Their ſhame ſhall cloath them; they ſhall not put their ſhame under their cloaths, their ſhame ſhall be in ſight.

Eſt quaſi præmium peccati, mercedis enim nomine Syndones olim dabantur.

Thirdly, They *ſhall be cloathed with ſhame*, may be underſtood thus, *ſhame ſhall be their reward.* They have been doing the buſineſs of Satan, he ſets them a work, now ſee what livery they ſhall have at laſt, into what ſute the devil will put them: They ſhall go in a livery of diſhonour. Servants are cloathed by their Maſters; Satan cloaths his ſervants, and this is their cloathing, they ſhall be cloathed with ſhame. *Sampſon* was to give thirty change of garments to the *Philiſtines* for a reward, if they could declare his riddle (*Judg.* 14. 12.) Satan gives liveries and garments of ſhame to thoſe who ſtudy out his riddles, and do his drudgery.

Natura pudore tacta ſanguinem ante ſe pro velamento diffundit & obtendit. Macr. l. 7. c. 11.

Fourthly, If we take the letter of the Hebraiſme, *to be cloathed with ſhame* implyes thus much, that when a man hath done a thing of which he is aſhamed, he (as it were) ſends forth blood into the

the face, in a blush, to cover that foul act, he puts out a red garment, or a scarlet vail to hide his filthiness. Thus he is cloathed with shame. Modesty commands nature, and (where it is but honestly natur'd) prevails with it to cast this covering over all uncomelinesse in speech or practise; and though this blush appears only in the face, yet the whole body is dipt & died with the same colour.

Hence also they who are ashamed, either hold their hands before their faces to cover them, or hold their heads down that they may not be discovered. Observe,

Solent qui erubescunt manum faciei, quia opprobrium ac dedecus timent admovere. Bold

That which evill men glory in, will be matter of their abasement.

The Apostle saith, *They glory in their shame* (Phil. 3. 19.) not formally, but materially. No man can glory in any thing under the notion of shame, but many glory in that which is in it self shamefull, and will be their shame. The Hebrew expresses an Idol, by a word that signifies shame, or a shamefull thing (and it is the root of that in the text) becaufe Idols, first, or last, make their worshippers ashamed, *Jer.* 11. 13. *According to the number of thy Cities were thy gods, O Judah, ye have set up altars to that shameful thing.* Idolaters shall see at last how foolish they have been in worshipping a stock or a stone, in adoring the inventions of their own brains, which can do them no good in an evil day: every Idol is a shameful thing, becaufe it deceiveth it's worshippers: so every sinful act will be like an Idol, matter of shame, becaufe every sin is a deceit, Isa. 26. *They shall be ashamed for their envy at my people:* They shall see their envy against the people of God was unreasonable, groundless and fruitless, therefore they shall be ashamed; and if they shall be ashamed of their envy against the people of God, how shall they be ashamed of their opposition and injuries, of their oppression and injustice, Isa. 41. 11. *Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed.* The Churches enemies glory in their own shame, and the Church shall glory in the shame of her enemies; therefore she is called to behold it, as a piece of her glory.

בּוּשׁ

Idolum cujus pudet cultorem, postquam ab eo in periculis destitutus, nec adjutus fuerit.

Observe further, *They that hate thee shall be cloathed with shame*, then, *wicked men are haters of the righteous.* They are haters of God, therefore they must be haters of those who have the Image of God upon them. As he that loves, so he that hates him that begets, hates him also that is begotten. Natural men are such haters of holiness, that they hate that which is but the Image, the Idol of holiness, *hypocrisie*; they cannot endure a man, who doth but seem religious. It is said of the *Panther*, that he bears such hatred against man,

that

that if he see but the picture of a man, he will tear it to pieces. Many men have such an hatred against true, reall goodness, that they cannot abide the shadow or appearance of it.

And the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.

We have met many passages to this purpose. *Dwelling place* in the Hebrew is a tabernacle, because they were wont to dwell in tabernacles. And when he saith, *His tabernacle shall be brought to nought*, The meaning is, *His whole estate shall be brought to nought*; not only the walls of his house shall be overthrown, but all his goods, his riches, his honours, his titles, his children, his relations, whatsoever is dear to him shall be *brought to nought*; the Hebrew is, *it shall not be*; it shall be, as if such a thing had never been in the world. God will at last make an utter *consumption* of wicked men. None who have tabernacles in the world, shall long have a tabernacle in the world. But the fall of these mens tabernacles shall not be according to the condition of mortality only. As *Moses* speaks of *Corah*, *Dathan*, &c. These men shall not die the common death of all men, a remarkable judgement shall overtake them. Some take *tabernacle*, to note their religious duties, their worship and service of God, and so their spiritual estate. Wicked men will serve God outwardly, they have their tabernacles as well as the Saints, they pray and hear, &c. But, be it a civil, or be it a religious tabernacle, down it must, all their riches and all their religion shall come to nought.

Olim in tento-ria habitabant, unde factum ut tentorium pro qualibet domo accipiatur. Per domum innuit familiam totam cum omnibus rebus domesticis Drus.

אינן

ס'א ἔσται *ad verbum, non ipsum, subintelligitur est, vel erit.*

JOB,

JOB, Chap. 9. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Then Job anſwered and ſaid,
I know it is ſo of a truth: but how ſhould man be juſt with God?
If he will contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.
He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength: who hath hardened himſelf againſt him and hath proſpered?

IN the former Chapter *Bildad* gave a threefold advice to *Job*.

Firſt, To think aright of the juſtice and judgements of God.

Secondly, to humble himſelf and ſeek unto God.

Thirdly, (Which is implyed in both the former) to forbear complaining of his own troubled life, or deſiring the end of it by death.

To theſe three heads of *Bildads* advice or reproof, *Job* ſhapes his anſwer in this *9th*, and in the *10th* Chapter.

Firſt, He opens his thoughts about, and highly magnifies the juſtice of God, to the 21. verſe.

Secondly, He renounces his own righteouſneſs, and proves, that no man is to be judged by the preſent dealings of God with him, from the 21. verſe to the end of the Chapter.

Thirdly, He renews and juſtifies his complaint againſt his life, and his wiſhes for death, by many arguments, in the tenth Chapter.

In moſt of theſe points he anſwers exactly, according to the ſtrict laws and rules of diſputation.

Firſt, Repeating his Opponents argument, and then yielding what was true, denying what was falſe, and diſtinguiſhing about what was doubtfull. Which he doth with ſo much acuteneſs and vigour, with ſo much ſtrength and clearneſs both of reaſon and judgement, that one of the Ancients cries out upon the whole matter

matter of his answer in these Chapters, *O how much Phylosophy (I may say, how much logick) hath Job shewed in this reply to the argument of Bildad!*

Quantum verba hæc præ se ferunt philosophiam. Chrys.

Bildads argument speaks to this effect; *God who hath punished thee is just, therefore thou art unjust. Job* in answer grants the antecedent, but denies the consequent. His grant of the antecedent appears in the two first verses of the Chapter, *I know it is so of a truth* (I yield this) *but how should a man be just with God?* He proves and confirms that God is just, in the fourth verse, by a double *medium*.

First, From his wisdome, *He is wise in heart.* And

Secondly, From his power, *He is mighty in strength.* What force there is in these two Attributes to hold up the justice of God, we shall see afterwards.

The fourth verse is likewise a concession unto the second part of *Bildads* advice, namely, that *Job* should humble himself. As if *Job* had said, *You advise me to humble my self, and to seek unto God, it is most becoming I should do so, for he is wise in heart, and mighty in strength; who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?* There is no standing out against God, and therefore I yield, I fall down and abase my self before him.

That God is thus powerful and wise, he goes on to prove in the following parts of the Chapter to the 22. *verse*, by the enumeration of many particular acts and effects, both of his power and wisdome.

The other part of his argument, namely, the consequent, that therefore *Job* was unjust and wicked, he denies, and more, refutes it strongly. His negation and refutation begin at the 22*th* verse. *This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the righteous and the wicked.* As if he had said, *This is no argument, that I am a wicked man, because God hath destroyed my estate, and my children; for God (in this sense) destroyeth both the righteous and the wicked. It cannot be proved that I am wicked, because God hath afflicted me; or that God hath afflicted me for my wickedness: I know another way how to acquit the justice of God, and to declare him righteous, though I do not joyn with you in condemning and judging my self (in your notion) unrighteous.*

This is the sum of his answer contained in the ninth Chapter. In the tenth he renews his complaint, as before in the sixth, and sheweth (after he had given God glory under all his sufferings)

what

what great reason he had to be sensible under the pain and smart of his sufferings.

Verse 1,2. *Then Job answered and said, I know it is so of a truth.*

Thus he grants the antecedent, *I know it to be so of a truth*, or *truly I know it to be so*. The word hath a double force in it. Somtime of a bare, yet a strong asseveration, and sometimes of an Oath. *I know it to be so of a truth*, I affirm or aver the thing, or truly and indeed, or verily I know the thing to be so. As if *Job* had said, This is so much a truth, that I dare swear it is a truth, *that God is just*, I durst take my oath of it, if I were called to it; I would swear for the justice of God, above all things in the world. *As we ought to swear in truth* (Psal. 89. 49.) *so to affirme a thing to be so in truth, is swearing.*

אמנם *Asseveratio quædam est rei sibi bene exploratæ. Radix Aman, fidelem, stabilem, veracem esse, unde* Amen.

Further, the word is taken either in way of affirmation, or in way of confirmation. In way of affirmation, it refers to that which is to be spoken; so frequently in the new Testament, *Amen, Amen, verily, verily*, is a vehement affirmation of what was afterwards to be spoken, *Verily, verily, I say unto you*. But here rather it is a note of confirmation of the truth already spoken; The Syriack of the new Testament use it commonly for an affirmation; the Hebrew in the old, for a confirmation.

Amen duplicem habet sensum, 1. *Ut sit affirmatio eorum quæ dicturi sumus.* 2. *Ut sit confirmatio eorum quæ jam dicta sunt. Hebraicè innotare solet confirmationem. Syriacè in N. T. affirmationem.* Bol.

So then, it is here a sealing to the former truth delivered, both by *Bildad*, and *Eliphaz*, about the justice of God; *Eliphaz* in the 4th Chapter, vers. 17. and *Bildad* in the 8th. vers. 3. *Doth the Almighty pervert judgment?* No (saith *Job*) *I know it of a truth, that he doth not.* And so the sense runs thus.

Bildad, dost thou surmise, by what I have spoken, that I have ill or hard thoughts of the justice of God? Did I ever think that justice was perverted, because I was afflicted? I acknowledge thou hast truly said, that God doth not pervert judgment; and I acknowledge thou hast faithfully counselled me to seek unto God, and make my supplication to the Almighty; for alas! who am I that I should contend with God? What am I that I should dispute it out with him concerning my troubles and his dealings with me? Or if I should be so rash, so fool-hardy, and adventurous, to attempt such a thing, alas! I could make nothing of it, I could not answer him one argument of a thousand, whereby he might maintain his own justice, or to one charge and article of a thousand, whereby he might impeach mine. I am no match for God. Therefore I yeild thee the whole matter, so far as concerns the honouring of

God in that great Attribute of his justice, and the duty of weak man in humbling himself before the great God. I know it to be so of a truth.

Note hence,

First, *That in all disputes and controversies it is a note both of an ingenuous and of an holy heart, to yeeld as much as without wrong to truth may be yeelded unto.*

It is good to agree as far as we can, if we cannot agree in all. We should walk with an adversary one mile (when it lies in our way) though we cannot walk twain. Assoon as *Job* hears a truth, he falleth down before it. He hath not a word to speak against the truth of God, though it come from erroneous men. He will be a friend to truth, though brought by them who seemed his enemies. If this law of disputation were well observed, many disputes would be sooner ended. As some out of love to men are apt to entertain their very errours; so some out of hatred to men reject their truths. Errours cannot be really adorned, nor truths soiled by those who hold them. Our judgment about both must be carried by reason, not swayed by affection. Willingly to embrace and receive a truth from those, whose errours we most zealously oppose, is the due temper of a champion for the truth.

Jobus *veritatis fidissimus assertor, qui omnia ratione, non affectionis sensu metiretur; tam ingenuè fatetur & commendat vera quæ ab impugnatoribus promuntur, quam generosè falsa depellit; quod hoc præsertim capite liquidò demonstrat, dum veram duorum disputatorum assertum, non admittit modò, verum elegantissimè & disertissimè integro ferè capite amplificat & exornat.* Pined.

Secondly, *I know it to be so of a truth*, saith *Job*, Observe,

A godly man is a knowing man.

He is established in truths, especially in great and necessary truths, in the vitals and fundamentals of religion. *Job* had been long acquainted with this principle, that God is just, and that every man must abase himself before him, how just soever any man is. Light is the first thing which God makes in the new Creation of Grace, as it was in the old creation of nature: He casts in a beam, a ray into the soul, whereby we may discern of things that differ. There may be darkness in a godly man, but he dwels not in darkness: bring a truth to him, and as there is somewhat in his heart that answers and is a kin to it, so that apprehends and makes out his acquaintance with it, often at first sight, alwayes after consideration, unless he be under clouds and temptations. In those cases we may bring truths to holy men, which they doe not *know to be so of a truth*, yea, which they may refuse for errours. But usually a good man knows truth having learnt it before, or as having a likeness to other truths he knew before.

Thirdly, *I know this to be so of a truth* (saith *Job*) In the midst of his pains, in the greatest troubles of his flesh, he forgets not to honour God.

Hence

Hence observe,

A gracious heart gives testimony to the righteousness of God, though severely chastned under the hand of God.

When God deals most hardly with the soul or with the body, or with soul and body, a holy heart hath not a hard thought of God, *I know it to be so of a truth*; He doth not only acknowledge that God was just, when he punished others, but when he afflicted him. The common argument which the friends of *Job* took up to prove God to be just, was this; God is righteous, for he deals with men according to their deserts: but *Job* argues thus, God is righteous, however he deals with men, and whatsoever those men are, let men be wicked or upright, holy or prophane. When we see God breaking the wicked, and making gall and wormwood, fire and brimstone the portion of their cup, this argues his Justice, because he hath threatned such with wrath and vengeance. But the Saints go further, they proceed upon purer and sublimer principles, maintaining that God is just, though he afflict the justest and holiest man upon the earth. The righteousness of God shines forth to them thorow the darkest sufferings of righteous men. The righteousness of God is not grounded upon the object about which he dealeth, whether righteous or unrighteous, but upon the act of his own will, yea upon the pleasure of his own will. His righteousness proceedeth from himself, and he is a righteous act, whatever the object be upon which he acts. We need not say, God is just, because he punisheth the guilty; for God is just, though he afflict the innocent. We may at once maintain our own innocency, and the justice of God, while we bleed under his hand, or smart under the severest scourges. *I know it to be so of a truth.*

But how shall man be just with God.

M. *Broughton* reads, *And how can man be just before the Omnipotent?* and so the sense runs more clear, taking the first particle for a pure copulative, whereas we read it as a *discretive*; *but how shall man be just before God?* Namely, in your sense; as if he had said, you discourse of Justice under such a notion as renders it impossible for any man to be just before God; in one sense a man may be righteous before God, but in yours no man can. Would you not have a man know himself to be just, unless he know himself to be without sin? If you take just, to be the same as with out in-dwelling sin, then it is impossible for any man to appear just before

Illud cum Deo vel ante Deum erit aliquid forense & judiciale.

God: but man may be juſt and righteous before God, though he have ſin dwelling in him, and that's my notion of juſtice in this diſpute.

Juſtice is either inherent or imputed. By inherent juſtice no man is juſt before God: according to imputed juſtice, man may be juſt, and is before God. So theſe two propoſitions are reconciled, *No man is juſt before God: every believer is juſt before God.* Our tranſlation uſing the diſcretive, *But*, ſeems to carry this intendment, that no man can be juſt before God by inherent juſtice, which the next verſe implies, *For if he contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.*

The words taken in this ſenſe are the ſame with the ſeventeenth verſe of the fourth Chapter, *Shall mortall man be more juſt then God?* There *Eliphaz* ſpeaks comparatively in a way of exceſſe, *more juſt*, or, *juſt rather then God*: He cannot exceed God in any thing. Here *Job* ſpeaks comparatively in a way of equality, *How ſhould man be juſt with God?* He cannot compare with God at all. Yet the ſenſe is the ſame, and the deniall of mans perfect inherent righteouſneſs is the ſubject of both. A juſt man comparing with God, deprives himſelf of all his juſtice. He is not ſo much as man may be, by aſpiring to be what God is. But I need not ſtay in any further clearing, how man is not juſt before God; or in any obſervations from it, but ſhall refer the Reader back to the fourth Chapter.

Quiſquis ſe authore bonorum comparat, bono ſe quod acceperat, privat, ea ipſa ratione, qua quis ſe componit Deo juſtus eſſe deſinit, quamvis juſtus fuerit. Greg.

Onely take this from it, *How ſhall man be juſt with God? With God*; that is, looking upon, or comparing himſelf unto God; as if he had ſaid, It will take down all the proud and high thoughts of man, in regard of his own juſtice and righteouſneſs, if he will but caſt his eye upon God, and duly conſider how juſt and righteous God is. Hence obſerve,

The way for us to humble our ſelves for our own ſinfullneſs, is to look up and to conſider the purity and holineſs of God.

If we ſet our ſelves before him, we ſhall ſee how vile and corrupt we are. His fulneſs will convince us abundantly of our emptineſs, his purity will ſhew us our ſpots, and his all-ſufficiency our nothingneſs. If we bring a courſe peice of cloth before a fine, we ſhall ſee what courſe ſtuff it is: if we lay a better in any kinde by a worſe, the worſe will appear worſer then before. For the moſt part we who are courſe ſtuff our ſelves, compare our ſelves with thoſe who are as courſe as our ſelves. While ſome men compare them-

themſelves with men, they begin to think they are like God himſelf. A man looking upon his neighbour is juſt before him, or ſees him no better then himſelf, of no purer thread, of no better die in his life then he; I have faults, and ſo have others; I have failings, & ſo have my neighbours; if you charge me with my ſinnings, who is it that is without ſin? As our uſuall phraſe is, *If the beſt mans faults were written in his fore-head, it would make him pull his hat over his eyes.* Thus uſually men compare themſelves with men; but if they would look up to God, O how would the thoughts of their hearts fall, and be abaſed before him. The Phariſee could pride himſelf in his compariſons with men (*Luk.* 18.) *God be thanked I am not as other men are, nor as this Publican.* But Phariſee, art thou as God? pure, and holy, and juſt as he? *Look upwards, and pride will down.* The holy Apoſtle, (2*Cor* 10.12.) ſpeaking of thoſe falſe Apoſtles, ſaith, *They meaſuring themſelves by themſelves, and comparing themſelves amongſt themſelves, are not wiſe.* So we may ſay to men in generall, while ye take a ſcantling of your own wayes, by your own rules, and meaſure your ſelves by your ſelves, or while ye meaſure man by man, and compare creature with creature, ye are not wiſe; while we go this way to work pride will not down. Man hath ſome reaſon to ſay, I am as good as man, I have ſinned, and ſo hath he, ſuch a man hath as many ſins as I. But if we look up to God, we ſhall quickly finde that he hath no ſin at all in him, and that we have no goodneſs at all in us. The beſt of Saints muſt not only confeſſe, with *Paul*, *I know that in me (that is, in my fleſh) dwelleth no good thing*, (Rom. 7.18.) but he muſt confeſs alſo, *I know that in me, even in my ſpirit, dwels no good thing, in compariſon of the goodneſs of God.* Though man in regeneration is made *a partaker of the divine nature* (2 Pet. 1.4.) yet his nature cannot bear the perfections of the divine nature. *How ſhall man be juſt with God?*

Verſe 3. *If he will contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.*

This is a confirmation of the former grant. I (ſaith he) acknowledge no man can be juſt, by inherent righteouſneſs before God, For, *If he would contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.*

If

If he would contend.

רפץ
Voluit, optavit.

The word, *If he would*, is, *If he have a minde, or delight to contend*, if any man takes pleasure in contending with God, he shall quickly (as we speak) have his hands full, and his belly full of it.

From this word the Church is called *Hephzibah*, that is, my pleasure is in her (*Isa.* 64.2.) And (*Psal.*16.3.) *David* professes of the Saints (*Hephsibam*) *my pleasure*, or, *my delight is in them.* So here, if any one hath a pleasure, or a delight, or would take upon him to contend with God, or (as the word signifies) to chide, to argue, and plead with God. The word may be taken either for an angry chiding, or a rationall chiding, which is disputing. The place where the *Israelites* did contend or chide with *Moses*, is called *Meribah*, from this word, *Exod.*17.7. And after *Gideon* had pul'd down *Baals* altar, a great controversie or contention, a pleading or arguing ensued, therefore he was called *Jerubbaal*, a contender or pleader with *Baal*, Judg.6.21.

רוב
In foro & extra litigavit, disceptavit, causam egit, seu dixit etiam de verbali tantum contentione seu actione dicitur. Merc. *Contentio hæc est rationibus, objectionibus, responsionibus, argumentationibus cum Deo agere.* Pined.

Now (saith *Job*) if a man take delight to contend, plead or argue with the Lord, What will be the issue of it? He is like to have a cold pull of it, *He cannot answer him one of a thousand*, poor creature! Before I open that, take this observation.

Man naturally loves to be contending.

φιλόνεικός est cui victoria potior est veritate Est. in 1 Cor. 11.

Some cannot live but in this fire, and in troubled waters (1 *Cor.* 11.16.) *If any man seems to be contentious*, or as the Greek carries it, *a lover of victory*. Contentious spirits love victory more then truth, and to overcome more then to teach or be taught. Besides the verb, which we (in this text of the Apostle) translate *seems*, doth rather signifie, *is pleased to be, desires, or hath a will to contentious*, yea boasts and prides himself in it. So the word (δοκεῖ) is used, *Mat.* 3.9. and *Gal.* 6.3. *If a man think himself to be something*, &c. That is, if he boast and take upon him, as if he were some great man. Thus some glory to be medling and contending in all Questions. Yea, though it be upon as unequall termes, as *Jehoash* the King of *Israel*, by his parable, supposed *Amaziah* King of *Judah* would war with him (2 King.14 9.) *The thistle that was in Lebanon, sent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon*, &c. Thistles will sometimes challenge Cedars, whom we may counsell, as he doth, *tarry at home, why shouldest thou meddle to thy hurt?* It argues folly enough in any man to love contention with man, and pride enough to love contention with men above him. Then how mad are they

εἰ δέ τις δοκεῖ, non aliud est quam εἰ δέ τις θέλει. Si quis sibi in eo placeat, quod contentiosus sit. Dan Heins exerc.

both

both with folly and pride, who attempt to contend with God? Whom, as it follows, *They cannot answer*,

One of a thousand.

אלף
Pædagogus, dux quod alijs præire solet, sicut Aleph prima litera reliquas omnes] præcedit, hinc Eleph, milles numerorum princeps.

A thousand is a great number, a full number, and therefore it is put for all great numbers. It is a leading number, therefore the word in the Hebrew for a thousand, cometh from the root which signifies to lead, and the *Noun*, a *Duke* or a *Captain*, who is a chief and a leader of men, *Gen.* 36. *The Dukes of Edom*, or the leaders of *Edom*: As also a master or teacher, because he goes afore, and is chief over those he instructs. And hence the number *thousand* in the Hebrew hath it's name, because a *thousand*, is (as it were) a prince among numbers, a chief number, a captain number; and is therefore put for all great numbers. or for the greatest numbers that can be imagined: to say, *one of a thousand*, is, as much as to say, *One amongst all.* *One* is not a number, it is but the seed, principle or beginning of number. A unity hath a seminall vertue in it; all numbers are made out of *ones*, but *one* it self is no number. So that to say, *One of a thousand*, is to put the greatest and the least number in opposition, it is as much as to say, a man cannot answer God in any thing that ever he did in the whole course of his life (2 Pet. 3. 8.) *One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* When he saith, thousand years, he means all years, all time put together, it is but as one day to the Lord. A day was the first distinction of time; the first perfect time that was created, was a day: now put a thousand years together, it is but as one day to the Lord; *All times and one time are all one to him who inhabites eternity.* In *Psal.* 90. 6. it is, a thousand years are but as yesterday, which notes all time past, as *Peter* notes, all time to come, is, but as one day.

Unitas huic numero oppositio, pro nihilo habetur.

One of a thousand, referred to a person, notes choice, excellent man among all men (*Job* 33. 23.) *If there be an interpreter, one among a thousand*, one choice man amongst many, or amongst all. He that rightly expounds the text of a troubled conscience, and interprets the minde of God to such a soul, is a chief, the flower of a thousand, a man of men. Christ (*Cant.* 5. 10.) is called, *the chiefest of ten thousand*; the Hebrew is, a standard-bearer, such are choice men, elect of the multitude. Christ is the elect of all the multitudes in the whole world; bring all Armies of men together, or an Army of man-kinde, chose amongst them all, and you cannot finde

finde such another as Christ is, he is the choice of *ten thousand*, that is, the choice *of all the thousands* that are in the world.

He cannot answer him one of a thousand.

He cannot answer.] Some refer it only to the person. *He*, that is, one man of a thousand men, is not able to answer God.

Secondly, We may refer it to the matter, to the objections or charges, that shall be brought against him, he cannot answer to one thing of a thousand. So M. *Broughton*; as if he had said, *If God brings many charges*, or layes many articles against him, he is not able to satisfie God, or give a good account in one.

Vilem hominum conditionem judex contemnet. Polychron. *Tantum non est homo, ut Deus cum sua responsione dignetur.* Vatabl. *Illud non poterit, idem erit quod nolet, vel per transpositionem verborum, poterit non respondere.*

Thirdly, Some refer it to God himself, *If he*, (that is, man) *should contend with him, he would not answer him one of a thousand*, that is, God would not answer him one of a thousand: as if he had said, the matters will be so trivial and so sleight, the charges that a man can bring against God, or the objections he can make will be so easie, that the Lord will not vouchsafe to answer one word of a thousand. Some men will plead priviledge to some charges, and all their answer shall be, they may chuse, or it is at their liberty whether they will answer or no. Here *he would not* (referred to God) is as much as he need not, he is no way obliged to answer, he may claim priviledge. Further, when arguments are poor and empty, a man will say in dispute, *These things are not worth answering*; or of a Book, there is not one page that is worth a confutation, it carries its own confutation. Such a sense may be made out here, God will not dishonour himself by contending with so weak an adversary as man, or by answering such simple arguments.

Rogatus homo in judicio divino, hæsitavit, æstuabit, obmutescet.

But rather (as before) refer it to man, *He cannot answer him one of a thousand*; that is, if God come to question man, to lay such and such matters to his charge, or object against him; *poor creature*, he must shut his mouth, put up his books, he hath nothing to say, he must hide his face, for he cannot answer him one of a thousand. So in the 14*th* verse of this Chapter. *How much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to plead with him?* Hence observe.

First, *That there is in man a spirit ready to contend against God himself.*

If he contend with him, or, *if he plead with him*, which supposes that

that there is such a principle of pride in the heart of man. The heart of man is very full of quarrels and contentions with man, but fuller of quarrels with God himself. The great controversie between God and man, is whose will shall stand, Gods will or mans. God directs man one way, and man contendeth he will go another way. There is a natural unanswerableness between the heart of man, and every thing that God doth or speaks; hence it is that man calls God to often to answer. There is a contention, first about that work of God, the foundation-stone of all the works of God, his decrees and counsels. While the Apostle (*Rom.* 9. 20.) stops such mouths, he shews how ready they are to open, *O man, Who art thou that replyest against God? Thou wilt say, wherefore doth he complain?* Thus man begins to contend. But, O man, who art thou, that thou shouldest dare reply upon God? Wilt thou be venturing to question the righteous God? Must he be accountable to thee for what he did before thou hadst a being?

Secondly, What contentions are there continually about the rules which God gives man to order his life by? Man thinks this is an unreasonable rule, that's a hard rule, and a third is an unprofitable rule; how many rise up against the Law, to which they should submit, and would shift off obedience to the rule, by complaints against it? *The carnall mind* (or, *the minding of the flesh*) *is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,* (Rom. 8. 7.) Words importing highest opposition, and that, irreconcileable. It is not, it cannot be subject; the mind is never subject to the Law, till it be changed into the Law. Christ saith, that one iota or tittle of the Law shall not pass, till all be fulfilled; it is as true, that not one iota or tittle of the Law can be fulfilled by by us, till our carnal mindes pass away. *Paul* found just as much stubbornness and contrariety against the will of God remaining in him, as there was of a carnal mind remaining in him (*Rom.* 7.) As man desires not the knowledge of the will of God (*Job* 21.14.) and secretly wishes that he were ignorant of what he knows, so he wisheth there were no such thing to be known; and that the revealed will of God were less by so much, as it specially opposeth his will.

Thirdly, the contest about providence grows as high in the hearts of men, as that about predestination to life, or the rule of life. The Saints sometimes (modestly) enter this controversie, *Let me plead with thee*, saith *Jeremiah*, Chap. 12. 1. *He* doth it, we see,

with a great deal of trembling and submission; he seems to ask leave before he doth it. Hypocrites contend with God proudly about their own good works, (*Isa.*58.3.) *Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not?* As if they had done so well, that God himself could not mend it. Carnal men plead with God profanely about his works; as if he had done so ill, that they could mend it. *Ye say, the way of the Lord is not equal: hear now, O house of Israel, is not my way equal? Are not your wayes unequal?* Ezek.18.25. They charged God with ill dealing, because he punished them, who did evil. *Wherefore will ye plead with me? ye all have transgressed against me, saith the Lord,* (Jer.2.29.) they began to plead with God about his dispensations, as if he had been unrighteous or rigorous; *Wherefore will ye plead with me? I will plead with you, saith God,* vers.9. God may plead and contend with man, but shall man plead and contend with God? Ye have all sinned and transgressed against me; that's enough to stop your mouths; I can answer you with one word, *Ye are a company of sinners,* then plead not with me, *Plead with your mother, plead,* Hos. 2. 2. let man plead with man, man with his neighbour. The wit of one man may compare with the wit of another, and their justice may hold plea with one another. But neither the justice, nor the wit of man will serve him to hold plea with God. That is a second observation,

Man is not able to maintain his cause, and hold plea, either against the works of God, or for his own.

If he dispute with God in the schooles, or see an advocate to implead him at the bar, he is not able to answer him *one of a thousand* (Isa. 45.9.) *Wo be to him that striveth with his maker;* it is this word, *Wo be to him that contendeth with his maker,* for he shall not be able to make out one argument, or prove any thing against him; such a man is in a very sad condition, wo unto him. *David* prayes, *Ps.*143.2. *Enter not into judgement with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified*; as if he had said, Lord, if the holiest and purest, if the best of men should come and stand before thee in judgement, or plead with thee, they could not be justified: therefore *David* was so far from contending with God, that he deprecates God contending with him, enter not into judgement with thy servant: such a charge is laid upon *Job* (Chap.33.13.) *Why dost thou strive with him? for he giveth not an account of any of his matters.* And if he should condescend to give an account, can any man gain by it? The Lord argues so convincingly, *That every mouth*

must

must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God, Rom. 3. 19. Every mouth shall be stopped, when God opens his. When God speaks, man hath nothing to say against him, *Every mouth is stopped*, with this one word, *Man is a sinner*. The Apostle points at some (Tit. 1. 11.) *Whose mouths must be stopped*, he means, with reason to convince them that they are in an errour. By this one argument, *That all men are sinners*, God stops their mouths for ever.

Thirdly, By way of corollary, we may give you that general truth.

That no man can be justified by his works.

If we contend with him, we cannot answer him one of a thousand. He that mixeth but one sin with a thousand good actions, cannot be justified by his works; how then shall he be justified by works, who hath not one perfectly good action amongst a thousand sins? Man is not able to answer for one thing he doth of a thousand, no not for one thing he doth of all that he hath done. He that would be justified by his works must not have one ill action amongst all his actions. One flie in the box of ointment corrupts all; one defect makes a sinner, but many good actions cannot make one righteous, *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart* (1 Joh. 3. 20.) Should man contend with his own heart, that will condemn him, his own heart would bring a thousand witnesses against him sooner then one for him. *Conscience is a thousand witnesses*; man cannot answer before that tribunal, how much less can he answer God, *Who is greater then our hearts, and knoweth all things!* That's the argument *Job* goes on with, to prove that man cannot be justified before God.

Vers. 4. *He is wise in heart and mighty in strength, who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?*

Which words are a further illustration both of the justice of God, and of mans duty to be humbled and abased before him.

He is wise in heart and mighty in strength.

Here is a double proof in these words.

A proof, first of Gods justice; why? *He is wise in heart*, therefore he knows how to do right: *He is mighty in strength* or power, therefore he needs not pervert judgment, or do wrong for fear of man. *Fear of a higher power usually biasseth those who are in power.* Here are two Attributes which keep the ballances of divine judgement

Integerrimus judex cui nec sapientia ad judicandum, nec potentia ad exequendum deest.

ment in a due poise, *He is wise in heart and mighty in power*, therefore there is no turning of him out of the path of justice.

Secondly, It is a proof or a confirmation of the other point about which *Bildad* adviseth *Job*, namely, that he ought to seek unto God, and humble himself before him. It would be dangerous to contend or contest with God. Why? *He is wise in heart and mighty in power.* As if he had said, Shall ignorant, foolish man contend with the wise God? shall weak man contend with the mighty God? Alas! man is no match for God, *He is wise in heart and mighty in strength*, who can enter such a controversie and prosper in it?

There are two wayes to carry on a controversie.

First, By wit and policy.

Secondly, By strength and power. If man will take up the former weapon against God, if he work by wit and dispute against God, God will be too hard for him; *For he is wise in heart.* If man will set his shoulders or take up weapons against God, poor creature, what can he do? *The Lord is mighty in strength*; from both we see there is no dealing with him.

Dolus an virtus quis in hoste requiret?

These two attributes render God at once the most dreadful adversary, and the most desireable friend. It is a hard choice whether to have wit or power in an enemy? And who would not have both wit and power in his friend? God is here represented under these two notions, both meet in him, either of which in an enemy render him dreadfull. Will any man enter the lists, or meddle with an adversary (who would not rather humble himself, and make him his friend?) *Who is wise in heart, and mighty in power.*

He is wise in heart.

Humanitùs dictum, cor in Hebræo sumitur pro judicio & intellectuali potentia, ita homo vel Deus sapiens corde dicitur, qui præstat sapientia. Pined.

It is spoken after the manner of men; the heart naturally is a principall organ or part of the body, it is the seat of life, thither the spirits have their recourse, there they have one special seat of residence; the heart is chief in man. To say, *God is wise in heart*, is to say, *He is most wise*, because the heart is the seat of wisdome. As when we say of a man, he is holy in heart, or he is humble in heart, or upright in heart, or he obeys God from his heart, we report such a man for exceeding humble, holy, upright and obedient. So when God is said to be wise in heart, it imports that he hath infinite wisdome; his, is not only wisdome in the tongue, or some flashes of wit, but deep, solid, rooted wisdome; He is wise, yea, he is wisdome

dome at heart. A fooliſh man is without an heart. As an hypocrite hath two hearts, a double heart, an heart and an heart; ſo a fooliſh man hath never an heart. Hypocrites will be found at laſt to have no hearts, they are the greateſt fooles of all. *Ephraim* (*Hoſ.*7.11.) is called, *a ſilly Dove without heart*. Silline ſs is heartleſneſs. Therefore in the 12*th* Chapter of this book, *verſe* 3. the heart is put alone for underſtanding, *I have an heart as well as you* (ſaith *Job*) we tranſlate it, I *have underſtanding as well as you*. Heart alone notes wiſdome, but a wiſe heart notes abundance of wiſdome. Hence obſerve,

God is infinitely wiſe.

He is wiſe in heart, wiſdome it ſelf, the Lord ingroſſes all wiſdome, and is therefore ſtiled by the Apoſtle, *God only wiſe* (1 Tim. 1.17.) he is only wiſe, becauſe all wiſdome is his; the creature hath none but what he gives out; he hath it all lockt up in his own treaſury; and as he diſpenſeth it, ſo man receives it.

There is a twofold act of wiſdome, and both moſt eminent in God. The firſt is knowledge in the nature of things. The ſecond is, knowledge how to order and diſpoſe of things. The former is properly called *Science*, and the latter *prudence*. Where there is much of the former, and a want of the latter, man in that caſe is like a Ship that hath a very large ſail, but wants a rudder to order it's courſe, and ballaſt to poiſe it. Both theſe meet in the Lord: he hath (as we may ſay) a vaſt ſail, infinitely extending to the knowledge of all things: and he hath a moſt exact rudder, and ballaſt of prudence, to order and to manage all things. The knowlege of ſome men is too hard for their wiſdome, they are not maſter of their knowledge, though they may be maſters in their art. The Lord knows all, and he rules all his knowledge.

And mighty in ſtrength.

בוֹת
Differt à
חיל
quod ſtrenuitatem ad geſta præclara ſignificat, idem quod Græcè δύναμις *quæ ſe foras exerit in opere. Merc.*

It is much for man, to be ſtiled *ſtrong* or *mighty*; but *mighty in ſtrength* is the ſtile of God. Theſe in conſtruction note the Almightineſs, the All-powerfulneſs, the All-ſufficiency of the Lord; he is not only ſtrong or mighty, but mighty in ſtrength.

The word which we tranſlate *ſtrength* (referred to man) imports that natural power and lively vigour which in man is the principle of ſtrength, which nurſes and feeds man with continual ſupplies of activity. The Lord is mighty in this ſtrength, he hath an infinite, an everlaſting ſpring of ſtrength in him, he ſpends no

ſtrength

strength at all, how much soever he uses. His lamp consumes not with burning. His strength is ever vigorous, he knows no decayes or faintings, *Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creatour of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary?* (Isa. 40. 28.) As if he had said, where hast thou been bred, that thou seemest to be a stranger to this truth? Man cannot doe much, and he faints in doing a little. God who can do all things, never faints, how much soever he doth.

Δύναμις ἐξουσία.

Strength may be considered two wayes. There is civil strength, and there is natural strength. Civil strength is authority and power to command. A man is armed and strengthened by laws and commissions. These put authority into his hands. The Lord is mighty in this strength, he hath all authority, all command in his hand, not by commission from others, but originally from himself. Natural strength executes and exercises the former; a man may have much civil strength, but if he want natural strength to put it in act, he can do little or nothing. As God by his Soveraignty is above all creatures; so by his power he is able to bring all creatures under him, and subdue them to his command. Thus God is mighty in strength. He hath a right of authority, by which he may, and an arm of power, by which he can make all stoop to him. Hence observe,

The power of God is an infinite power.

There is nothing too hard for the Lord, *If he will work, who shall let it?* Isa. 43. 13. No creature can *supersedate* or stay the works of God, God can *supersedeat* all creatures; when creatures are in their full carreer, he can lett them: *The power of God is as large as his will*; yea he can more then he wills. If the power of men were as large as their wills, what work would they quickly make in the world? If infinite strength were not managed by infinite wisdome, what a woful condition were we in? Both these are joyned in God. Therefore we can fear no hurt from his power: He can do what he will, but he will do nothing which is hurtful to his people; he will not wrong any creature, much less his servants. The Lord (if I may so speak) is only weak about those things, which proceed from weakness. There are some things which he hath no strength to do, because to do them argues a want of strength: he cannot deny himself, he cannot lye, he cannot do any evil, he cannot sin. These things import

port impotency, therefore the Lord cannot do them. But whatsoever is for the good of his people, for the glory of his name, for the executing of his justice, for the fulfilling of his counsels, whatsoever is for the making good of his promises, for all these the Lord is mighty in strength. Never fear either a defect of power in God, or a defect in managing that power. Sometimes power overthrows it self by its own bulk and greatness; but mighty strength ordered with equal wisdome, is dreadfull to enemies, and comfortable to friends. *A rude rout, an undigested Chaos of men, though very great, never did any great thing.* But suppose a very numerous army of men, and every man in that army having as much wisdome as would fit a General to lead and command them all, what could stand before them? thus it is with God (and how admirable is the union and marriage of these two together!) he hath all power and all wisdome. Every degree of power in God is acted with a suitable degree of wisdome; therefore there can be no miscarriage.

Vis consilij expers mole ruit sua.

Note further, how this Attribute runs thorow all the Attributes of God, *He is mighty in strength*; he is mighty also in truth, mighty in love, mighty in mercy, mighty in faithfulness: a mighty strength is in whatsoever God is.

Again, take this general concerning all the Attributes of God, when it is said, *He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength*, &c. These are not qualities in God; they are in men. Wisdome is to them an accident, and so is strength, whether civil strength, or natural, it may be severed from them, and they still keep their being. But the wisdome of God is the wise God, and the power of God is the powerfull God, and the knowledge of God is the knowing God. These Attributes are not accidents, but his essence; not qualities, but his nature.

From both these Attributes laid together, *Job* draws down his great conclusion, which he puts by way of question.

Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?

Shew me the man: having described the Lord in his wisdome and power he challengeth all the world, and sends defiance to all creatures in heaven and in earth, to meet with this God. As if he had said, *Friends, do you think I have any thought to contend with God? No, I know not one who hath accepted this challenge, or hardened himself against God and prospered. If my own Conscience would*

not

not, yet their harms who have attempted it, might warn me from such presumption.

Hardeneth himself.

קשה

Indurare aut obdurescere. Metaphoricè à tactu ad alios sensus transfertur, & denotat crudele sævum, difficile, quod dura sunt difficilia. Durum est quod in se per superficiem non cedit. Arist. l. 4 Met. c. 4. Durities est qualitas densas et bene compactas habens partes, diffi ulter cedens tactui Arist. l. 2. de Gener.

Hardening under a natural consideration, comes by withdrawing the moisture out of any substance, whence the parts of it are condensed, grow stiff and unyielding to the touch: So Philosophers define it. That is hard which doth not easily submit to impressions from without.

In a moral sense, to harden is to settle the spirit, or immoveably to resolve upon the doing or not doing of a thing: when a man doth purposely resolve and resolvedly purpose to carry on a design, he hardeneth himself to do it. The word is used both in a good sense and in an ill sense. In a good sense, when a man is resolute to do the will of God, that is, when he grows so resolved that he will not be removed by hopes or fears, by promises or by threats; when a man hath not a soft, sequatious spirit to be swayed this way and that way, but stands fixed and firm like a rock; such a resolute spirit in goodness, is a spirit hardened to do good.

When the Lord had told *Ezekiel* that he should find the ears of *Israel* lock'd against his messages, and their hearts hardened, he gives him assurance of a suitable ability to deal with such (*Ezek.* 3.8,9.) *Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy fore-head strong against their fore-heads, as an adamant harder then flint have I made thy fore-head.* The words seem to carry an allusion to Bulls or Rams, who use to run head against head, when they are enraged one against another. And so the sense is, as if the Lord had said, *I know this people will be mad at thee, and run upon thee like furious beasts; but trouble not thy self, I will (through my grace) make thee as strong in declaring my will, as they (through pride and unbelief) are strong in opposing it. Thou needest not fear to encounter these Bulls and Rams: holiness shall make thy fore-head, that is, thy purpose to perform my command, harder, then wickedness shall make their fore-heads, that is, their purposes to disobey what I command.* As to be hardened in sin is worse then sinning, so to be hardened in doing good is better then doing good. Sin and grace act most like themselves, when they act against all opposition. *As an adamant have I made thy face.* The adamant is insuperable, as the notation of the * word imports. A heart thus hardened in holiness overcomes all the fears and terrours which the world can raise against it. Heroicall *Luther* was thus hardened, when he said, he

* *Adamas ejus creditur esse, naturæ, ut domet omnia neq; ipsa ab ulla vi sive arte domari possit. Unde nomen traxit; ἀ δαμας, sonat indomitum. Sanct in Ezek. 3.*

i wou

would go to *Worms*, though the tiles upon every house in that City were matcht with a like number of Devils, ready to resist him and the truth of Christ. But usually hardening is taken in an ill sense: and so to harden the spirit, noteth,

First, A resolving to sin, what soever God saith or doth. To sin against the word and works of God, that's hardning of the heart against God: when a man will go on in his way, though a threat be sounding in his ears, and a judgement appear terribly before his eyes; such a man is hardened indeed, he is grown valiant and couragious in wickedness.

Obdurare cor est Deum loquentem nolle audire, contemnere, pervicaciter resistere, nec se ejus verbo subjicere velle Par. *in Heb.* c. 3. v. 8.

Secondly, A man hardens himself against God, when he speaks stoutly against God: the hardness of the heart appears in the tongue (Mal. 3. 13.) *Your words have been stout against me.* Stout words are a sign of stout spirits. Our language is usually the image of our minds. So the words of the text is used (2 *Sam.* 19. 43.) *The words of the men of Judah were fiercer then the words of the men of Israel:* Their words were harder then the words of the men of *Israel*; they spake more resolutely and manly. When a man sets himself to speak boldly against God, the wayes or the works of God, he hardens himself against God fearfully.

Thirdly, We harden our selves against God when we are displeased with what God doth; That man makes a bold adventure, who dares pass but an unpleasing thought against the wayes or works of God.

Fourthly, Not to be satisfied with what God doth, is a degree of hardening our selves against God; discontents and unquietnesses upon our spirits are oppositions.

Fiftly, Not to give God glory in what he doth, hath somewhat in it of hardening our selves against God.

And lastly, He that will not give God glory in what he commands, is in a degree hardned against God. We may see what it is to harden our selves against God by the opposite of it (*Pro.* 28. 14.) *Blessed is the man that feareth always; but he that hardeneth himself shall fall into mischief.* Hardness is contrary to holy fear; holy fear is a disposition of heart ready to yeeld to God in every thing: A man thus fearing, quickly takes impressions of the word, will and works of God; and therefore whosoever doth not comply with God in holy submission to his will, hardens himself in part against God.

That which is here chiefly meant is, the grosser act of hardness, when men either speak or go on in their way acting against God, let

him ſay what he will, his word ſtops them not; or do what he will, his works ſtop them not. They are like the adamant, the hammer of the Word makes no impreſſion upon hard hearts, but recoyls back again upon him that ſtrikes with it. More diſtinctly; this is either a ſenſible hardneſs of heart, of which the church complains (*Iſa.* 63.15.) *Wherefore haſt thou hardned our hearts?* &c. or an inſenſible hardneſs, which in ſome ariſes from ignorance, in others from malice and obſtinacy.

Further, We read of Gods hardening mans heart, and ſometime of mans hardning his own heart. There is a threefold hardneſs of heart.

Firſt, Naturall, which is the common ſtock of all men; we receive the ſtone of a hard heart by deſcent; every man comes into the world hardened againſt God.

Secondly, There is an acquired hardneſs of heart. Men harden themſelves, and add to their former hardneſs. *He ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God, and ſtrengtheneth himſelf againſt the Almighty*, Job 15. 25. There is a growth in ſin, as well as a growth in grace, many acts make hardneſs more habituall (2 Chron. 36.13.) *He ſtiffened his neck, and hardned his heart from turning unto the Lord. I know thy rebellion, and thy ſtiff neck*, Deut. 31.27.

Thirdly, There is a judiciary hardneſs of heart, an heard heart inflicted by God, as a Judge. When men will harden their hearts againſt God, he agrees it, their hearts ſhall be hard, he will take away all the means which ſhould ſoften and moiſten them, he will not give them any help to make them pliable to his will, or he will not bleſſe it to them. He will ſpeak to his profits, and they ſhall make their hearts fat (that is, ſenſleſſe) and their ears heavy, that is, heedleſſe under all they ſpeak, *Iſa.* 6.10. Thus alſo God hardned the heart of *Pharoah* and of the *Ægyptians* by the miniſtry of *Moſes* and *Aaron*.

So then we having hardneſs of heart by nature, do by cuſtome acquire a further hardneſs, and the Lord in wrath inflecteth hardneſs, then the ſinner is pertinacious in ſinning. All theſe put together make him irrecoverably ſinfull, *His neck is an iron ſinew, and his brow braſs*, Iſa. 48.4.

Obſerve, firſt, *There is an active hardneſs of heart, or man hardens his own heart.* Exod. 5. We read of *Pharaoh* hardning his heart, before the Lord hardened it; *Who is the Lord* (ſaith he) *that I*

ſhould

should let Israel goe? Here was *Pharaoh* hardening his heart, and steeling his spirit against the command of God. God sent him a command to let *Israel* goe; he replies, *Who is the Lord? I know not the Lord*: who is this that takes upon him to command me? Am not I King of *Ægypt?* I know no Peer, much less Superiour Lord. It was true indeed, poor creature! he did not know the Lord; *Pharaoh* spoke right in that, *I know not the Lord*; if he had, he would never have said, I will not let *Israel* go, he would have let all goe at his command, had he known who the Lord was that commanded. Thus *Sennacherib* (2*Chron.*32.14.) blasphemes by his messengers, *Who was there among all the gods of those Nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand?* These are hard words against God, and hardening words to man.

Every act of sin hardens the heart of man, but the heat of blasphemy at once shews and puts it into the extremity of hardness. Man hardens himself against God four wayes especially.

First, Upon presumption of mercy; many doe evil, because they heare God is good; they turn his grace into wantonness, and are without all fear of the Lord, because there is so much mercy with the Lord.

Secondly, The patience of God, or his delayes of judgment, harden others; because God is slow to strike, they are swift to sin. If the sound of judgment be not at the heels of sin, they conclude, there is no such danger in sin. *Solomon* observed this (Eccl. 8.11.) *Because sentence against any evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*, or, *it is full in them to doe evil.* They have not some velleities and propensions, some motions and inclinations, some queries and debates about it, but the matter (upon this ground) is fully stated and determined, they are so full of it, that they have no room in their hearts for better thoughts or counsels: the sum of all is, they are hardened and resolved to do evil.

Thirdly, Gross ignorance hardens many, 1. Ignorance of themselves. And, 2. Ignorance of God: he that knows not what he ought to doe, cares not much what he doth. None are so venturous as they, who know not their danger. *Pharaoh* said, *I know not the Lord*, he knew not the Lord, nor himself, therefore he ran on blind-fold, and desperately hardened himself against the Lord.

Fourthly, Hardness of heart in sinning is contracted from the multitude of those who sin. They think none shall suffer for that which so many doe. The Law of *Moses* said, *Thou shalt not follow the multitude to do evil* (Exod.23.2.) There is a special restraint upon it, because man is so easily led by many. The heart is ready to flatter it self into an opinion, that God will not be very angry, when a practice is grown common: this is the course of the world, this is the way of most men; therefore surely no great danger in it. And examples harden chiefly upon three considerations.

Ego homuncio non facerem. Ter.

First, If great ones go that way. The Heathen brings in a young man, who hearing of the adulteries and wickednesses of the gods, said, what? Doe they so, *and shall I stick at it?*

Secondly, If some wise and learned men go that way, ignorant and unlearned men conclude they may.

Thirdly, If any godly men, such as make more then ordinary profession, doe such things, then who may not? The failings of the Saints are a countenance to wicked men in their follies. They are apt to follow the dark side of the cloud, and to approve those in what they doe ill, whom they scorn in what they doe well. They imitate their falls and sins, whose repentance they never think of imitating. How many harden their hearts by their doing what is evil, whose hearts have been broken, because they did evil? From the sin which a holy man commits against his purpose and resolution, many purpose and resolve to commit it.

Upon these and the like grounds, the heart of man is hardened against God. Take a brief of the degrees of this hardness; see by what steps the heart rises so high in sinning. Man doth not grow hard at once, much less hardest. But when once he begins to harden himself, where he shall make an end he knows not.

The first step is, the taking time and leave to meditate upon sin, and roll it up and down in the thoughts. A hard heart lets vain thoughts dwell in it. A holy heart would not let them lodge with it.

A second step is, some tastes of pleasure and delight in sin. It proves a sweet morsell under his tongue. As the heart grows more delighted in sin, so more hardened in sin. Nothing should be so bitter as sin in the act, for nothing will be so bitter as sin in issue: but when the act it pleasant, the issue is seldome suspected.

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The third step is, custome in sinning. It argues great boldness to venture often. One said of him that had escaped danger at sea, If you go again, you have no reason to complain, though you be wrack'd. Mariners are fearfull of storms at first, but through custome they play with them. When a man comes off once safe from sin, he will venture again, and so often, till at last he thinks there is scarce any venture at all in sin. He grows bold and hardy.

Improbè Neptunum accusat, qui iterum naufragium facit.

By the fourth step of hardness he comes to defend and maintain his sin. He hath spoken so long in his heart against the word, which forbiddeth him to sin, that now he can speak against it with his tongue. He hath a plea or an argument to make the evil he doth good. He appears a Patron, an Advocate for sin, who was before but a practiser of it.

Fifthly, The hard heart grows angry and passionate with those, who give advice against sin; he is resolved; and a man that is resolved in his way, is angry if he be desired to remove out of his way: He that resolveth to sleep, loves not to be awakened. A touch or a jog from him that sits by, provokes him, he prayes to be let alone. We should love the man while we hate and reprove his sin. But he that loves his sin will hate his reprovers.

Sixthly, Hard hearts grow too hard for the Word, they are *Sermon-proof*; they can sit under the Preacher, and heare from day to day, but nothing touches them. A man in armour feels not the stroke of a sword, much lesse the smart of a rod. This hardness of heart is a steel armour to the heart, it makes the man past feeling till he be past healing. *Some being often reproved harden their hearts* (Prov. 29. 1.) till their hearts are too hard for all reproofes.

And then seventhly, The heart is so hard that the sword of affliction doth not pierce it, the man is *judgment-proof*: let God strike him in his person or estate, let God set the world a Fire about his ears, yet on goes he. He is like the man of whom *Solomon* speaks, (*Prov.* 23. 34.) who lies sleeping in a storm upon the top of a mast.

Eightly, the hard heart sits down in the chair of the scorner, he derides the Word, and mocks at the judgements of God. When *Lot* spake to his sons in law about fire and brimstone, ready to fall upon *Sodome* and consume it, the text saith, *He seemed as one that mocked unto his sonnes in Law?* what, tell us of judgments? of fire

descending

descending from Heaven. *When the skie falls we shall have Larkes.*

Lastly, The hard heart gets up to the Tribunall of the persecutour, and from scorner *commences opposer of good men*, and *of the good wayes of God*; he will do them the uttermost mischief he can, who would doe him all the good they can. *Get thee from me*, saith *Pharaoh* to *Moses*, (Exod. 10. 28.) *Take heed to thy self: See my face no more; for the day that thou seest my face thou shalt dye.* *Pharaohs* hard heart spake hard words, and was preparing to give hard blows: he had only so much of honour and ingenuity left, as to warn the Prophet to avoid the blow: Which yet is more then hardness of heart leaves to all. Many an hard heart uses the hand before the tongue; and instead of saying to his reprover, See my face no more, lest thou die, calls him before his face, that he may dye, or seek his death behinde his back, and lies in wait for revenge. And here *hardness of heart is at hardest. It is now a fit cushion for Satan: He sits softest upon this stone*; The devil is never so much pleased, as when man is most hardened; the seed of his temptations takes root and prospers best in this stony ground.

But shall man prosper too? Shall any man thrive or make a gain by hardening himself against God? Shall he come off with honour or with pront? *Job* answereth, *Who hath hardned himself against him, and hath prospered?* Which may be resolved into this negative proposition, *No man ever hardned himself against God and prospered.*

וישלם

Et pacatus fuit, vel in pace abiit (i. e.) feliciter & bene cesserit, Merc. *Nemo pertinax gloriari potest, quod post conjectam victoriam, pace potitus fuerit.* Pined. *Nemo cum Deo pugnans, sic eum assidua pugna fatigavit, ut pacem accipiat ultro à Deo oblatam.* Idem.

The Hebrew thus, Hath any man hardened himself against God, *and had peace?* Mr. *Broughton* renders near it, *Hath any man hardned himself against God, and found quietness?* To have peace or quietness, and to prosper, are the same in the language of the Jews, and in an hundred Texts of the old Testament.

We may understand *Job* either of these three wayes.

First, No pertinacious hard-hearted man could ever glory that he got the better, or the day of God, and so prospered into a peace by war; that's away of prosperity, in which he shall never tread. *Gideon*, told the men of *Penuel*, *when I come again in peace*; that is, when I have conquered and return prosperous, then, &c. No man ever conquered God, and so returned in peace. Peace was never the Trophie of a war with him.

Secondly, *who ever hardened himself against God and prospered?* That is, did ever any man so weary out God by lengthening this war,

war, that God was (as it were) forced at last to offer him terms of peace? So it happens sometimes with men, with Nations and Kingdoms; They not getting peace by victory, but being spent and tired out with war, begin to think of treating. Did ever any one put the Lord to offer a treaty with articles of peace, to save himself from further trouble? They who have not strength enough to overcome, may yet have power enough to vex and weary their adversary. But God can neither be vanquish'd by force, nor vext with our policies into a peace with man.

Ab æquipollente pacem mali, ut pugnando obtinere possit; licet enim eum superare non possit, tamen assiduitate pugnæ eum fatigat, ut ad pacem reducatur. Aquin. *Quis permansit, aut perstetit,* ἐπέμεινεν. *Sep.*

Thirdly, Others give this sense, Who ever held out, or was able to persist in a war against the Lord? The wicked shall not stand before God in the day of judgement, much lesse in the day of battell; *Who would set the bryers and thorns against me in battell? I would go thorow them, I would burn them together* (Isa. 27. 4.) The most steely and flinty spirits in the world can no more stand before God, then briars and thorns can before a flaming fire. The Lord soon breaks and destroyes all opposing power. And so there is a figure in the words, for, man doth not only not prosper, but he is undone and crusht for ever, by contending with God. Shall man prosper in a war with God? No, it shall end in his own ruine and utter destruction. Whence observe,

That nothing can be got but blows by contending with God.

Hoc est signum evidens, quod fortitudo Dei omnem humanam fortitudinem excedit; quia nullus cum eo pacem habere potest resistendo, sed solum humiliter obediendo. Aquin. *Vicisti Galilæe.*

The greatest Monarchs in the world have at one time or other found their matches, but the great God never found his match. Pharaoh contended with him, but did he prosper in it? You see what became of him at last, he was drown'd in the red sea. *Julian* contended with Christ, scoffed at him, (he came up to the highest degrees, he sate in the chair of the scorner, and in the tribunal of the persecutour) but what got he at last? When he was wounded and threw up his blood toward heaven, said he not, *O Galilean, thou hast overcome*, I acknowledge thy power, whose name and truth I have opposed. Christ whom he had derided, and against whom he hardned himself into scorns and scoffs, was too hard for him. All that harden themselves against God shall be worsted. *Gather your selves together, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in peices*, (Isa. 8. 9.) Gather your selves together: against whom? Gather your selves together against the people of God, and ye shall be broken in peices; Why? *Emanuel*, the Lord is with us. If no man can prosper by hardening himself against the people of God, because the Lord is with them, how shall any man

prosper

proſper by hardening himſelf immediatly *againſt God* ? *If Emanuel* will not let any proſper againſt his people, certainly he will not let any proſper againſt himſelf. Therefore (*Prov.* 28. 24) *Solomon* layes it down directly, *He that hardeneth his heart ſhall fall into miſchief*; and (Prov.29.1.) *He ſhall be deſtroyed, and that without remedy* ; there is no help for it, all the world cannot ſave him. A heard hart is it ſelf the ſoreſt of all judgements, and it brings all judgements upon us. *A hard heart treaſureth up wrath againſt the day of wrath*(Rom.2.5.) *As a hard heart is Satans treaſury for ſin, ſo it is Gods treaſury for wrath.* The walls of that *fiery Tophet* are built up with theſe ſtones, with their hard hearts, who turn themſelves into ſtones againſt the Lord.

Then take heed of hardning your ſelves againſt God. You know the counſell which *Gamaliel* gave, *Act* 5.39. *Refrain from theſe men, and let them alone*, &c. (See how trembling he ſpeaks) *leſt you be found even to fight againſt God*; as if he had ſaid, take heed what you doe, it is the moſt dreadfull thing in the world to contend with God ; he ſpeaks as of a thing he would not have them come near, or be in the remoteſt tendency to. Man will not meddle with a mortall man, if he be too hard for him : how ſhould we tremble to meddle or contend with the immortall God ! Chriſt, *Luk.* 14. warning his Diſciples to *conſider before-hand what it is to be his diſciples*, gives them an inſtance of a King: *What King* (ſaith he) *going to make war againſt another King, ſitteth not down firſt and conſulteth, whether he be able with ten thouſand, to meet him that cometh againſt him with twenty thouſand?* Now, I ſay to you (if any ſuch be here) that have hearts ſteel'd or harden'd againſt God, who challenge God the field, and ſend defiance to heaven, O ſit down, ſit down, conſider whether you with your ten thouſand, are able to meet God with his twenty thouſand, that's great odds, half in half ; but conſider whether one ſingle, ſimple man, can ſtand againſt his twenty thouſand ; whether a man of no ſtrength can ſtand againſt infinite ſtrength; whether you who have no wiſdom, are able to ſtand againſt him that is of infinite wiſdom. Can ignorance contend with knowledge, folly with wiſdom, weakneſs with ſtrength, an earthen veſſel with an iron rod ? O the boldneſs and madneſs of men, who will hazard themſelves upon ſuch diſadvantages. *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in power, who hath hardened himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?*

And as God is ſo powerfull that no wicked man in the world

can

can mend himself by contending with him: so neither can any of his own people. If they harden themselves against God, they shall not prosper. To harden the heart against God, is not only the sin of a *Pharaoh*, of a *Senacherib*, and of a *Julian*, but possibly it may be the sin of a *believer*, the sin of a *Saint*. And therefore the Apostle, *Heb.* 3. gives them caution, *Take heed lest any of your hearts be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin*; and whose heart soever is hardened against God, that man good or bad shall not prosper, or have peace in it. It is mercy that God will not give his own peace, or let them thrive in sin. Grace prospers not, when the heart is hardened; joy prospers not, nor comfort, nor strength, when the heart is hardened: the whole state and stock of a *beleiver* is impaired, when his heart is hardened.

And if the Saints harden their heart against God, God (in a sense) will harden his heart against them; that is, he will not appear tender hearted, and compassionate towards them, in reference to present comforts; he will harden himself to afflict and chasten, when they harden themselves to sin and provoke.

When God afflicts his people, he hardens his heart against them; and it is seldome that he hardeneth his heart against them till they harden their hearts against him. And the truth is, if they who are dearest to him do harden their hearts against him; if they quarrel and contend with him; if they rise up against his commands, or neglect his will, he will make their hearts submit, or he will make their hearts ake, and break their bones. If they harden their hearts against his fear, they shall feel his rod upon their backs and spirits too. Which of the Saints *ever hardened himself against God and hath prospered?* No man, whether holy or prophane, righteous or wicked, could ever glory of a conquest over God, or triumph after a war with him.

JOB.

JOB, Chap. 9. Verſ. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger.

Which ſhaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.

Which commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not: and ſealeth up the Stars.

Which alone ſpreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the Sea.

Which maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South.

Which doth great things paſt finding out, yea and wonders without number.

JOB having in general aſſerted the power and wiſdome of God (he muſt have infinite power and wiſdom, againſt whom no man ever proſpered by contending.) Having I ſay aſſerted this in general, he deſcends to make a particular proof of it; as if he had ſaid, I will not only give you this argument, that God is mighty in ſtrength, becauſe no man could ever harden his heart againſt him and proſper, he hath foyl'd all that ever medled with him: but beſides, I will give you particular inſtances of it, and you ſhall ſee that the Lord hath done ſuch things, as ſpeak him mighty in ſtrength, and prove him as powerful, as I have reported him. Theſe particulars are reported, in the 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. verſes, all cloſed with a triumphant Elogy in the tenth, *Which doth great things paſt finding out; yea, and wonders without number.*

Subjicit Job confirmationem proximè præcedentis ſylogiſmi ab effectis tentiæ & ſapientiæ Dei, quæ ampliſſima oratione deſcribit. Merl.

The Argument may be thus formed;

He is infinite in power and wiſdome, who removeth mountains, and ſhakes the earth, who commands the Sun, who ſpreads out the heavens, and diſpoſeth of the Stars in the firmament.

But the Lord doth all theſe things, he removeth mountains, he ſhakes the earth, he commandeth the Sun, &c.

Therefore he is mighty in power, and infinite in wiſdome.

The firſt part of his argument is here implied. The aſſumption,

or

or the minor is proved in the 5,6,7,8,and 9.verses, by so many instances. Here then is an evident demonstration of the power of God from visible things, from acts apparent to the eye; as if he had said, *If you have not faith to beleive that God is infinite in power, let your senses teach it you, for he removeth mountains, and they know it not, He overturneth them in his anger*, &c.

He removeth mountains.

That's the first instance. The word which we translate to *remove* signifies to wax old and strong, because things as they grow in age grow in strength. There is a declining age, and an encreasing age. Things very old impair, and things growing older encrease in strength; we have the word in that sense (Job 21. 2.) *Wherefore do the wicked become old? yea, they are mighty in power*; he putteth these two together, growing old and mighty in power. The Septuagint render, *who maketh the mountains wax old*, because, *that which waxeth old is ready to vanish away* (Heb.8. 13.) or to be removed and taken away, as the Ceremonial Law was, of which the Apostle speaks in that place.

עתק

Senescere; quia quæ sic inveterascunt fortiora & robustiora cum tempore solent evadere, ideo idem verbum significat roborari.

ὁ παλαιῶν ὄρη. *Sept.*

And because growing old implies a kind of motion, therefore the word also signifies motion, even local motion, a moving from or out of a place, *Gen.* 12. 4. *Abraham departed*; he removed from the place where he was. This locall motion is either natural or violent: of this latter understand the Text, *Which removeth the mountains.*

The mountains.

There are natural mountains, and metaphorical or figurative mountains: it is an act of the mighty power of God to remove either.

Some understand this of metaphorical or figurative mountains, and so mountains are great men, men of eminency or of pre-eminency, the Kings and Princes of the world. The Chaldee is express for this sense, *He removeth Kings, who are as strong and high as mountains.* For as God hath ordered the superficies of the earth, and made some parts of it plain, others mountainous, some valleys and some hills. So he hath disposed of men, some men stand as upon level ground, men of an ordinary condition; others are as the low vallies, men of a poor condition; others are as the high mountains over-topping and over-looking the rest. The word is

Chaldeus per montes intellogit reges, qui loco movet reges fortes, ut montes. תרגם.

uſed in this metaphorical ſenſe, Iſa. 41. 15. *I will make thee* (ſaith the Lord to the Prophet) *a new threſhing inſtrument having teeth*; And what ſhall this new threſhing inſtrument do? *Thou ſhalt threſh the mountains, and beat them ſmall, and ſhalt make the hills as chaff.* Here is a Prophet ſent with a flail or a threſhing inſtrument, & his buſineſs is to threſh the mountains, and to beat the hills: the meaning is, thou ſhalt deſtroy the great ones of the world, the hills, the mountains, thoſe that think themſelves impregnable or inacceſſible. But how could the Prophet threſh theſe mountains, and what was his flail? *Gideon* (Judg. 8. 7.) threatens the men of *Succoth*, that he will *tear or threſh their fleſh with the thorns of the wilderneſs and with bryars.* And *Damaſcus* is threatned, becauſe *they threſhed Gilead with threſhing inſtruments of iron*, Am. 1. 3. That is they put them to extreameſt tortures. Our Prophet could not thus torture men. His threſhing inſtrument having iron teeth, was only his tongue, the inſtrument of ſpeech, with this he beat thoſe proud mountains to duſt, that is, he declared they ſhould be beaten and deſtroyed. Of ſuch a mountain, the Lord by his Prophet ſpeaks (Jer. 51. 25.) *Behold I am againſt thee, O deſtroying mountain, ſaith the Lord, which deſtroyeſt all the earth. Behold, I will ſtretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and make thee a burnt mountain.* This mountain was the proud State of *Babylon*, which was oppoſite to the Church of God, this *devouring mountain* ſhall at laſt be a *devoured mountain*, devoured by fire, therefore he calls it a *burnt mountain.* Thus (Zech. 4 7.) *Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou ſhalt become a plain.* The Prophet is aſſured, that all the power and ſtrength, which oppoſed it ſelf againſt the reformation and re-edification of *Jeruſalem*, ſhould be laid levell with the ground. So we may interpret (*Pſal.* 144. 5.) *He toucheth the mountains, and they ſmoak*; the meaning is, when God doth but lay his hand upon great men, upon the mighties of the world, he makes them ſmoak or fume, which ſome underſtand of their anger; they are preſently in a paſſion, if God do but touch them. Or, we may underſtand it of their conſumption. A *ſmoaking mountain* will ſoon be a *burnt mountain.* In our language, to make a man ſmoak, is a proverbiall, for deſtroying or ſubduing.

Per montes intelligit reges, qui ſi ut montes, firmitate & robore perſtant, Rab. Dav. *in Pſal.* 144. 5

And beſides, there are mountains (in this figurative ſenſe) within us, as well as without us. The ſoul hath a mountain in it ſelf, and is an act of the great power of God, yea, of an higher and

and greater power of God to remove inward, than it is to remove outward mountains, *Isa.*40.4. The Prophet fore-shewing the coming of Christ, and the sending of the Baptist to prepare his way, tells us, *Every mountain and hill shall be made low.* Christ did not throw down the outward power of men, who withstood him; he let *Herod* and *Pilate* prevail; but mountains and hills of sin and unbelief in the soul, which made his passage into them impassible, he overthrew. These mountains of high proud thoughts, the Apostle describes (2 *Cor.*10.14.) *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing, and bringing into captivity every thought* (every mountainous thought) *to the obedience of Christ.*

These are metaphorical mountains, the power of sinfull men without us, and the power of sin, the pride of our own hearts within us. It is a mighty work of God to remove these mountains.

But these are not proper to the Text, for the instances which follow, being all given in natural things, shew, that those here intended are natural mountains.

Taking mountains for earthly, material mountains, it is doubted how the Lord removes them.

There are different opinions about the point. Some understand it of a natural motion. * Philosophers disputing about mountains and hills, conclude that they are subject to generation and corruption; by the addition of many parts they are generated, that is, kneaded or gathered together, and become one huge heap of earth; and by the detraction falling and crumbling off, or taking away of these parts, they are removed again. Thus we may expound that (Job 14.18.) *And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought.*

Yet this cannot be the meaning of *Job* here. For though we grant that doctrine of the Philosophers, that there is a generation of mountains, and so a corruption of them, yet that corruption is so insensible, that it cannot be put among those works of God, which raise up the name of his glorious power.* *That which falls not under observation, cannot cause admiration. Slow and imperceptible motions make small impressions either upon the fancy or understanding.*

That here spoken of, is quick and violent, and by its easie representation to the eye, causeth wonder and astonishment in the beholders.

And so it imports a removeing them by some violent motion. Thus Pined.

* *Montes natura sua generabiles sunt & corruptibiles, additione partium generantur, & detractione partium corrumpuntur.* Aquin. & Cai.

Mirum è miranda est, si quas terræ partes, quæ nunc habitantur, olim mare occupabat, et quæ nunc pelagus sunt, olim habitabantur, sic campos et montes par est invicem commutari. Strab. l. 17.

* *Divina potentia in tam longa et segni montium remotione nos se præbet valde mirabilem cum nemo fere sit, qui eam rem videat.*

Thus the Lord is able to remove, and hath removed mountains, sometimes by earthquakes: sometimes by storms and Tempests, sometime those mighty bulwarks are battered with thunder-balls discharged from the clouds (Psal. 97. 5.) *The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord.* Hills melt down when he appears as a consuming fire (Psal. 104.32.) *He looks upon the earth and it trembleth, and he toucheth the hills, and they smoak.* Those rocky mountains are as ready to take fire, as tinder or touch-wood, if but a spark of Gods anger fall upon them. God by a cast of his eye (as we may speak) can cast the earth into an ague-fit, he makes it shake and move, tremble with a look; he by a touch of his mighty arm, hurls mountains which way he pleaseth, as a man doth a Tennis-ball. We read (*Isa.* 64. 1.) *How earnestly the Prophet prayes, O that thou wouldst rent the heavens and come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence:* Where he is conceived to allude to Gods coming down upon mount *Sinai* at the giving of the Law, *Exod.* 19. which is said, *To melt from before the Lord God of Israel*, Judg. 5.3. Some understand it of *that day* of Christ, when he shall come to judge the world; others of that day when Christ came in the flesh to save the world; then the mountains were levell'd according to the preaching of the Baptist; but rather, the Prophet being affected with the calamitous condition, which he fore-saw the Jews falling into, entreats the Lord to put forth himself in some notable works of his providences, which should as clearly manifest his presence, as if they saw the heavens (speaking as of solid bodies) renting, and God visibly coming down; then, those difficulties which lay in the way of their deliverance, and looked like huge mountains of Iron, or of Adamant, would presently dissolve like wax, or ice before the Sun or fire. The prophet *Micah* describes the effects of Gods power in the same stile (Chap. 1. 3, 4.) *Behold the Lord cometh forth out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth, and the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft: as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place.* So, to remove mountains is used proverbially, Job 18. 4. *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee, or shall the rock be removed out of his place*; that is, shall God work wonders for thee? Or, God will alter the course of nature, as soon as the course of his providence. To say God can remove mountains, is as much as to say, he hath power to do what he will: and the reason is, because mountains are exceeding great

Ex quo et hoc loco non absurde colligitur ita fuisse proverbium ad significandum maximam solig; Deo convenientem potentiam. Bold

great and weighty bodies: mountains are firmly setled; now, to remove a thing, which is mighty in bulk, and strongly founded, is an argument of greatest strength. The stability of the Church is compared to the stability of mountains, Psal. 125. 1. *They that trust in the* Lord *shall be as mount* Zion, *which cannot be removed, but standeth fast for ever.* The righteousness of God is compared to a great mountain (*Psal.* 36. 6.) because his righteousness is firm and unmoveable, *Thy righteousness is like the great mountains*, or the mountains of God. And (*Psal.* 46. 2.) the doing of the greatest things, and the making of the greatest changes that possibly can happen in any Nation, or in the whole world, are expresst by the removing of mountains, *Though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea, yet will we not fear*, &c. That is, things which carry the greatest impossibility to be done, or which are seldomest to be done, shall be done, before we will do this. As men, when they would shew how far they are from submitting to such a thing, say, We will die first, &c. So here, Who, we fear? No, mountains shall be removed first. He breaths out the highest confidence of the Church, in the lowest, not only of her present, but possible dangers. As faith can represent to us better things then any we enjoy, to raise our joy: so it can represent to us worse things (and put us harder cases) then any we feel, and yet carry us above fear. A faith removing mountains, is put for the strongest faith, *Though I had all faith, so that I could remove mountains* (1 Cor. 13. 2.) that is, though I had the strongest faith, the faith of miracles. When Christ (*Mat.* 21. 21.) would shew to the utmost what faith can do, he saith, *If ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also, if ye shall say to this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and it shall be done.* As if he had said, if you have faith, ye may do the greatest things imaginable or desirable, ye shall remove mountains. A mountain is immoveable by the meer power of a creature. Faith takes that in hand, because faith acts in the power of the Creatour. And as the faith of man removing mountains, notes a faith of miracles; so the power of God removing mountains, notes a miraculous power. *Isa.* 54. 10. the mountains.

So then, taking this speech either for the removing of natural mountains, or taking it proverbially, as it noteth the doing of the greatest things, and putting forth of the greatest power, it proveth the point, which *Job* hath here in hand, *viz.* That *God is mighty*,

mighty in strength; Why? He is able to remove mountains. Observe from hence,

First, *That the Lord if he pleaseth can alter and remove the parts of the earth, and change the frame and fabrick of nature.*

He that made the mountains unmoveable to us, can himself remove them. The Histories and Records of former times tell us how God hath miraculously tossed mountains out of their places. *Josephus* in his ninth book of Antiquities, *cap.* 11. mentions the removing of a mountain; and *Pliny* in the eight book of his natural History, *Cap.* 30. A later writer reports, that in *Burgundy* in the year, 1230. there were mountains seen moving, which overthrew many houses, to the great terrour of all the inhabitants of those countries. *Josephus* also reports the like done by an earthquake. And another tells us of Mount *Ossa* joyned to *Olympus* by an earth-quake. So that take it in the letter, the Lord is able to remove mountains.

Mons in Burgundia a proximo monte dehiscens, valles; proximas coarctans, multa agricolarum millia oppressit &c. Vvernerus in fasciculo Josephus Ant. l. 9. c. 12. Vide Senecam, l. 5. c. 15. et l. Quæ. Natur. & Plinium Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 38. Cum in agro Mutinensi montes duo inter se concurrebant impetu maximo assultantes, &c. Eo concursu villæ omnes elisæ sunt, &c.

It should make us fear before the Lord, and give him glory while we remember that even the outward frame of the world, is subject to sudden changes; there is no mountain, no rock, but the little finger of God can move or pull it down. As *David* spake of his metaphoricall mountain, his great outward estate. *Lord, thou hadst made it stand strong, yet thou didst hide away thy face, and I was troubled*, Psal 30. 6. his mountain began to shake, and became a very mole-hill, useless to him, when God was displeased. If the Lord with-draw himself from our civil mountains, we are troubled, and if he touch the natural mountains they are troubled. *Our mountains will skip like Rams, and the little hills like Lambs,* (Psal. 114. 4.) *when he is displeased.*

Secondly, observe, *That the power of God is made visible to us in the changes which he works in the creature, as well as in the constitution of the creature.*

The power of God made the mountains and created the hills; the same power removes mountains, and turns them upside down. *It argues as great a power to destroy the world as to settle the world.* As the Apostle shews what divinity the *Gentiles* might have learned in that great book of the worlds creation, (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even his eternall power and God-head*; so we may say on the other side, *The invisible things of him from the confusions which are in the world, are clearly seen*; or they

they may be underſtood by the things which are removed and changed, in theſe you may read his eternall power and God-head. When God breaks the laws and courſe of nature, he ſhews his power as well as when he ſettled the Laws and courſe of nature. He ſhews his power when he lets the ſea out of its place to overflow the earth, as well as when he bounded the ſea, that it ſhall not overflow the earth. Some things are with far leſs power deſtroyed then made, removed then ſetled; but no power can deſtroy the world, but that which made it, or ſuddenly remove a mountain, but that which ſettled it. The power of God muſt be acknowledged in altering as well as in ordering the naturall courſe or conſtitution of the creature.

And if we look to the change of Metaphoricall mountains it is a truth, an illuſtrious truth, that the Lord diſplayes his mighty power, in removing and over-turning the great eſtates and eſtabliſhments of men or kingdoms. When God removes the mountain of our peace, of our riches, the mountain of outward proſperity and of civill power, it becomes us to ſay, *He is mighty in power*, who doth all theſe things.

God hath given us great tokens and teſtimonies of his power in this. How many mountains, great mountains, men who were mountains, and things which ſtood like mountains in our way, how many (I ſay) of theſe hath the Lord removed? Our eyes have ſeen mountains removing, and mighty hills melting: the power of God and the faith of his people have wrought ſuch miracles in our dayes, *He removeth the mountains.*

And they know it not.

They, who? who or what is the antecedent to this, *They*? are the mountains? So ſome underſtand it, and then the word *know*, or the *act of knowing* is by a figure aſcribed (as many times in Scripture to creatures without reaſon, ſo) to creatures without life, *Pſal.* 58. 8. *before your pots can feel the thorns*; the Hebrew is, before your pots can underſtand or know the thorns, that is, before they are ſenſible of the heat of the fire to make them boyl, &c. An act of ſenſe, and is aſcribed to pots, which are things inſenſible.

Neſciunt, ſcil. montes, tributur rei inanimatæ ſenſum. Merc.

Puto eſſe modum loquendi indeterminatum, cui ſupplendum eſt ſubjectum mines. Bold.

But others take the antecedent to be *man*, *He removeth the mountains, and they know it not*; that is, men know it not. So Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates, *He removeth the mountains that men*

men cannot mark how he hath removed them out of their place in his anger.

Vatablus supplositum verbi nescierunt, ita supplet, nec agnoscunt (sc. homines imperiti) quia subvertit eos furore suo.

Supposing men to be the antecedent, there is yet a difference about the interpretation. *Men*, that is, say some, unskilfull men, ignorant men, they know not the meaning of this, they cannot, give a reason why or how mountains are removed; if God doth it *they know it not.* Others restrain it to *men*, inhabiting the mountains, they were secure, and thought their dealings so safe, that God removed their mountain before they dream'd of, much less feared any such thing; they had no thought that God would remove their mountain. Places strongly fortified either by art or nature, make men secure, and dangers unsuspected. The deluge in *Noahs* time prevailed over the highest mountains; but his sinfull posterity hoped to make an artificiall mountain, wherein they might even dare a second deluge. *Come let us build us a City and a Tower, whose top may reach to heaven* (Gen 11.4.) and then (except the stars and firmament be flouded) we shall be dry, how much or how long so ever it rains. Such towering thoughts, as these, were (surely) laid in the foundation of that intended Tower.

Locus sive ab arte, sive à natura munitus, reddit homines ab omni bellorum aut ruinæ suspicione securos. Sanct.

Take the text either of naturall or of figurative mountains, and to remove them, so, that man knows it not, may have a double meaning.

First, that it is done with great speed.

Secondly, That it is done with great secresie.

God is able to do great things in a little time, in so little time that men shall not know he is doing them, till they are done. He can do great things secretly, so secretly, that the way of their dispatch shall not be visible to the eye, or open to the understanding of men, till they are dispatcht.

Again, this clause [*And they know it not*] notes not only the security of men before the hand of God is upon them, but their stupidity, while it is upon them. So (Pro. 23.35.) *They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not*; the Hebrew is, *and I knew it not.* Hence observe,

The works and judgements of God, are often unsuspected and unobserved by men.

He removeth mountains, even their mountains, and they know it not.

'Tis true in reference to naturall, but especially to civill mountains. The rich, the mighty are cast down from their seats, or their

seats

seats are cast down before they saw any hand touching them; the whore of *Babylon*, and mother of fornications, who sits upon *seven mountains* (Rev. 17.9.) saith in her heart, *I sit a queen and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow*, (Rev. 18.7.) *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine*, &c. (ver. 8.) If her plagues come in a day, she (doubtless) thought not of them a day before. *Babylons seven mountains* shall be removed, she not knowing it; and as *Babylons* mountains shall be removed, when she shall not know, that is, suspect it; so, which is more strange, *Jerusalems* mountain was removed, and she did not know, that is, perceive it. The Prophets are expres (Isa. 42.25.) *Therefore he hath poured upon him* (namely, *Jacob* or *Israel*) *the fury of his anger, and the strength of battel, and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew it not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.* They were unobservant of those terrible things the Lord did among them. Some little anger passes often without notice, but here was the *fury of anger*; some slight skirmishes make no great noise, but here was *the strength of battel*; and not some few drops of both these, but either of them poured upon him by whole bucket-fuls, and these buckets of burning fury set him on fire, and that not in some one corner or out-house, but round about, *yet he knew it not.* Which is expounded in the next words *It burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.*

The Prophet *Hosea* (Chap. 7.9.) speaks as much of *Jerusalem* under the name of *Ephraim*, *Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not; gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not.* Strangers devour his strength, that is, according to the language of *Job*, the mountains wherein his strength did consist, were devoured and overthrown by strangers, and yet he knew it not, he did not observe the hand of God in the hand of man against him. *Gray hairs are here and there upon him*; gray hairs are a great change; gray hairs note the most discernable change of a mans life. There are two states of a man, easily distinguished, Youth, & Old-age, and gray hairs make the most visible distinction between these two; so that to say, *Gray hairs are upon him*, is to say there is such a change upon his estate, as is between a young man and an old man, and yet he knows, he observes it not. Of all things a man is most apt to take notice of his own natural gray hairs: and many are so troubled at the first sight of them (because they tell us we begin to be old) that they will pick them out; but such

is the senselesness of many about the dealings of God with them, that when great changes are upon them, changes like that of youth into old-age, they are not affected with it; providentiall or judiciary gray hairs are not often known.

Surely many of these gray hairs are upon us at this day: it will be sad if *England*, be like *Ephraim*, and know it not. It is worse not to know we have gray hairs, Then have them. The one is but our affliction, the other is our sin. Gray hairs are upon us, strangers have devoured our strength. As many oppressing mountains are removed (for which we ought to bless God, and admire his power) so some supporting mountains have been removed, and others shake terribly, for which we ought to mourn, and be humbled under the mighty hand of God. If we know not what God hath done; he can quickly doe enough to make himself known. *They who will not see the hand of God, when it is lifted up* (that they may be humbled) *shall see it, and be ashamed* (Isa. 26.11.) if the removing and shaking of our mountains doe not awaken us, the overturning of them shall; That's the next act of divine power in this noble description.

And overturneth them in his anger.

הפך *Vertit, subvertit significat versionem, vel in nihilum, vel in formam, aut qualitatem aliam, vel in locum alium.*

The word signifies to over-turn a thing, so, as to change the form and fashion of it, yea, to bring it to nothing; not only to remove a thing out of its place, but to take away the very being of it, and to remove it out of the world. He not only turns mountains into mole-hils, but into plains, yea into pits, they shall not be mountains any longer, nor any thing like a mountain.

It is much to remove a mountain, and set it in another place: but more to crumble it in a moment all to dust, that you shall not finde a peice or a clod of it. The prophet threatens the obstinate Jews in such a language, (Isa. 30.13,14.) *Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant, and he shall break it as the breaking of the Potters vessel*, &c. *So that there shall not be found in the bursting of it, a sheard to take fire from the earth, or to take water withall out of the pit.*

He overturneth them in his anger.

Anger in man is a mixt affection made up chiefly of these two ingredients, sorrow and revenge. Some call anger the boiling of the bloud

bloud about the heart, or the boiling of the heart in bloud; The fumes whereof rise so fast into the brain, that anger sometimes dislodges reason, and is therefore called by others a *short madness*.

Ira furor brevis est.

The word in the text signifies the *Nostrils*; and the Scripture frequently applies that to anger, because anger is seen and made visible in the nostrils. Quick breathing is a sign of anger. God is without parts and passions, he is not angry as man; but is said to be angry when he doth like man in his anger. The Lord is not moved or stirred by anger, but he is angry, when he makes motions & stirrings in the creature; he lets out the effects of anger, but himself hath not the affection, much less the perturbation of anger. Hence observe,

ΕΝ *Ira, inde transfertur ad nasum, qui est instrumentum iræ, & in quo ira præcipuè apparet. Fumes & mobilem in nasum conciunt.* Plaut.

That the troubles and confusions which are in the creature, are tokens and effects of the anger of God.

As the setling and establishment of the creature, is an effect or sign of his goodness, or as these tell us, that God is pleased: So when the Lord hurles the creature this way and that way, when he tosses it up and down, as if he cared not how, this is an argument of his anger. When *Moses* came down from the mount, and saw what the people of *Israel* had done, how they made a golden calf and polluted themselves with idols, such a passion of anger came upon him, that he threw the Tables of the Law out of his hand, and break them. So, when the Lord would signifie his displeasure, he throws the creature out of his hand, and breaks man against man, Nation against Nation (as a potters vessel) one against another. The comfort and well-being of the creature, consist in this, that God holds it in his hand; if he do but let it goe out of his hand it perishes, much more when he casts it with violence out of his hand. The Prophet (*Hab.* 3. 8.) describing the great confusions which God made in the world, questions thus, *Was thine anger against the rivers? Was thy wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses, and thy chariots of salvation?* God being angry with the enemies of his people, made strange work amongst them; *Rather then his people shall not be delivered, the world shall be confounded*: *Was the Lord angry with the sea?* when he compelled the rivers to change their courses, and discover the bottome of their channels, as in the passage of his *Israel* thorow the red sea? No, God was not angry with the sea, but with *Pharaoh* and his host, with the oppressours and troublers of his *Israel*; and when he was thus angry, he check'd the course of nature, and turned things up-side-down. When *David* was in a distress, and his enemies

enemies encompast him round about: what then? *Then the earth shook and trembled, the foundations of the hils were moved and were shaken, because he was wrath* (Psal. 18.7.) That, God might rescue *David* out of the hand of trouble, he troubled the foundations of the earth; he made the world shake and Kingdoms tremble, that his *David* might be setled upon his throne. The Lord threatneth (*Hag.* 2.6.) that he *will shake the heaven and the earth, and the sea and the dry land*; he will move all creatures, why so? He shakes them for the setling of his *Zion* (verse. 7.) *I will shake all Nations, and the desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.* When the Lord comes against the superstition, and idolatry, and profaneness, and wickednesses of the world in anger, no wonder if kingdomes shake: yea, he therefore shakes kingdomes, that he may establish *Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down, not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken*, Isa. 33.20. We are waiting when God will shake *Babylon*, and in his anger overturn the seven mountains thereof. *Babylon* is built upon mountains, upon seven mountains, to note the strength and power of it, yet the Lord will remove *Babylon* out of her place, and overturn those mountains in the fierceness of his anger, and in jealousie poured out, *Then every Island shall flee away, and the mountains shall not be found*, Rev. 16.20. That is, the remotest and strongest places which owned and maintained *Babylon*, shall either be converted or confounded, they shall appear no more under that spirituall notion, though in a naturall and civill they doe remain. *That which is not as it was, is spoken of, as if it were not: A great change in our condition, is called a change of our very being.* The anger of God overturns things, as if it did annihilate them. *Job* goes on.

Tanta extitit divinæ iræ vis pro Davide *contra hostes defendendo, ut videbatur orbem invertere, omnia miscere.* &c. Pined.

Verse 6. *Which shakes the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.*

This is the second instance, but in higher expressions of the same power of God.

Which shakes the earth out of her place.

ὁ σείων τὴν ὑπ' ἐρανον ἐκ τῶν ἐμελίων i. e. terrem universam Sept.

He had said before, God removeth mountains. Mountains are great bulky bodies, but no mountain is so great as the *Globe* of the whole earth. Now (saith he) the Lord doth not only shake mountains,

mountains, some great parts of the earth, but if he pleaseth he can take up the whole earth, and throw it out of its place, as a man would take up a little ball, and throw it into the air, *He shakes the earth out of her place.*

רגז

Non significat motum naturalem, sed commotionem quandam ex metu trepidationem, tremorem. Didacus Astunica putat hunc locum illustrari posse ex sententia Pythagoricorum, existimantium terram moveri natura sua Copernicus.

The word which we translate to *shake*, signifies a violent motion of the minde, caused either by fear (*Deut.* 2. 25.) or grief (2 *Sam.*18.33.) We read of a trembling heart from both (*Deut.* 28.25.) It is also applied to civill shakings and commotions by the troublesome spirits of men (*Prov.* 30. 21.) *For three things the earth is disquieted.* And to unnaturall shakings of the earth by the power of God (2 *Sam.*22.8, &c.) So in the text.

Some expound this of a natural motion. Those men have (surely) a motion and turning in their brains, who tell us that there is a continued motion of the earth, that it turns and never stands still, they would ground the motion of the earth upon this Scripture, translating thus, *Which moveth the earth in her place.* But the text tells us, that the earth hath pillars, and not wheels. Pillars are made for rest, not for motion.

Further, This text speaks of it, as of an act of Gods anger, therefore no ordinary act appointed in nature; and the word notes a violent motion, not a natural. But we need not stand to refute this motion. As when some denied all motion, a Philosopher to prove it, rose up and walked: So when any affirm or give reason for this motion, we may shew their senses that the earth stands.

This shaking then is extraordinary, the Lord who made the earth firm upon pillars, can make the earth move, as if it went on wheels.

This he doth, first, by earthquakes, these shake the earth (as it were) out of her place, and make it tremble. Histories are full, and many mens experience can give instances of such terrible shakings of the earth. This earthquake is not meant here, for there is a reason in nature for that. Philosophers dispute much about it, and tell us, when there is a strong vapour included or imprisoned in the bowels of the earth, that vapour seeking vent maketh a combustion there, and so the earth shakes. This, indeed, shews the mighty power of God, but it is in a naturall way, whereas the text seems to imply somewhat more, somewhat beyond the learning of Philosophers and Naturalists.

Besides, the text saith,

He

He shaketh the earth [*out*] *of her place.*

Whereas an earthquake shakes the earth in her place, and causes it to tremble upon the pillars thereof.

But did God ever shake the earth out of her place? We must understand the text conditionally. We have not any instance that the Lord hath actually done so, but this suspition may be put. The Lord can remove mountains and shake the earth, not only in, but out of her place; We finde such conditionall expressions often put in Scripture, not as if the things ever had been, or ever should be done, but if the Lord will, he is able to doe them (*Amos* 9.5.) *The Lord God of Hosts is he that toucheth the Land, and it shall melt*; that is, if the Lord doe but touch the land he can melt it. As the three children cast into a fiery furnace, had not so much as a garment, or a thread about them touched with it, because the Lord forbad the fire to burn: So, if the Lord bid a spark but touch us, it shall melt and consume us, as if we were cast into and continued in a fiery furnace. As a word made, so a touch shall mar the world, when God will; yet he hath not done thus unto this day. So in the text, *He shakes the earth out of her place*, imports what God can, not what he hath or will do. Note from it,

Terrificam capiti concussit terq; quaterque; Cæsariem cum qua terram mare sidera movit. Ovid. *met.*

That the Lord is able to doe greater things, then ever he actually hath done.

He hath not put the earth out of her place, the earth is where it was, but he can displace it. God hath never acted any of his attributes to the height, for they are infinite; he never acted power so high, but he is able to act it higher: He hath never acted mercy in pardoning so far, but he is able to act it further; a greater sinner then ever yet was pardoned, may be pardoned. A greater enemy then ever was overcome, may be overcome. He hath run with foot-men, and they have not wearied him, and he is able to contend with horses: in a land of peace he was never wearied him, and he knows how to wade thorow the swellings of *Jordan*. It is comfortable to consider, that the Lord cannot only do the same things again, which he hath done, but he hath never done to the utmost of what he is able to doe: he can out-doe all that he hath done, as much as the shaking of the whole earth out of her place, is more, then to remove a mountain, yea, or a mole-hill of earth.

And

And the pillars thereof tremble.

We have *the pillars of heaven*, Chap. 26. 11. here of the earth.

The pillars.

עמר

Columna erecta, à stando dicta.

The word in the original signifies to stand upright, to be erect, because pillars do so. There are two sorts of pillars, upon which there is a different interpretation of the word.

There are, first, *Supporting pillars*. And

Secondly, *Supported pillars*. Or, there are *pillars for ornament*; and *pillars for strength*. We set up pillars or pinacles upon the tops of great buildings for ornament, and they are supported pillars. We may call mountains such pillars: for, as when some stately palace is built, great pillars or pinacles are set upon the towers and battlements: so the Lord having framed the earth, hath set up mountains, as great pillars for the adorning of it, *He shaketh the earth, and the pillars thereof tremble*; it is true of these upper pillars, the mountains they tremble. But I take it rather to be meant of supporting pillars, under-pillars, which bear the frame above, and are as the bases or under-props of the earth (*Psal.* 105.) *Who laid the foundation of the earth*; the earth hath a foundation; the Hebrew is, *He hath founded the earth upon her Basis*, alluding to a building. Most buildings have their foundations in the earth; but some upon it, being raised upon pillars. So *Hannah* (1 Sam. 2. 8.) in her Song, *the pillars of the earth are the Lords, and he hath set the world upon them.*

What are these pillars that the Lord hath set the world upon? or where shall we find them?

David shews us (*Psal.* 24. 1, 2.) *The earth is the Lords and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein: for he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the flouds.* It is strange that pillars of liquid water should bear up the massie earth; the earth seems rather to be the pillar and foundation of the waters. Some interpret (*super*) which signifies, *upon*, by *prope* or *juxta, near*, he hath founded it upon the seas, that is, he hath founded it by, or near the seas. But take it in the letter, and it is a truth: for the sea is as much the pillar of the earth, as the earth is the pillar of the sea; earth and sea being a globe and round, the Sea is as much under the earth, as the earth is under the sea. Thus the pillars of the earth are waters, *And the earth is established upon the floods.*

Further, If you would know what these pillars are, hear what *Job* saith, (*Chap.*26.7.) where he assures us that God *hangeth the earth upon nothing*. We are not to think that the Lord in framing and building the earth did first set up pillars, and then set the earth upon them, for the earth hangeth as a ball in the midst of the air, without any pillars under it. Hence *Job*'s Philosophy teaches us, *That he hangeth the earth upon nothing*; there are no material or visible pillars to sustain it.

What is then the pillar of the earth? What is it that supports and bears it up? *The reall pillar of the earth is the power of God.* But the power of God cannot tremble? how then doth he say, *When he shaketh the earth, the pillars thereof tremble?*

Terræ columnæ, infimas terræ partes significant, quæ reliquam terræ molem impositam sustinent; hæc sunt velut fundamenta et fulcra terræ.

In this place therefore we may expound the pillars of the earth, for the lower parts of the earth, and so, though the whole globe of the earth taken together be neither higher nor lower, yet in the parts of it from any point, some are higher, and some are lower, some above and some beneath; upon what superficies soever we are, the under parts thereof are (to us) the pillars of the earth. So the meaning is, *He shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble*; that is, he shaketh it so terribly, that if it had any outward visible pillars, those pillars must needs tremble.

Quo pacto terra firma et immota consistit? quidnam pro vehiculo habet? cujus rei adminiculo fulcitur? rationi nihil occurrit cui innitatur, si divinam voluntatem exceperis. Greg. Nazianz *Orat.* 34

Suis libratur ponderibus fixa manet.

In this we may observe the great power of God in upholding the earth. We see what the pillars of the earth are, the supposed pillars are no other then the lower parts of the earth; and the true pillar of the earth is no other, but the power of God: there are no other buttresses or pillars upon which the earth is set, or by which it is sustained; this huge weight of the whole earth and seas, is borne up by the thin air. Is not this an argument of the mighty power of God, that the air which is a body so weak, that if you throw a feather up into it it will not stay there, but descend, yet the whole mass or globe of the earth and waters hang there? God poiseth it meerly by its own weight: *For he weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in ballances*, Isa. 40.12. He upholds all things by the word of his power, *And hath built this great Castle in the air*. Could we enter into the secrets of nature, and set our faith a work by our senses about these things, we should be raised above all fear in the greatest difficulties. If we saw but a bullet, or a piece of lead of a pound, yea of a penny weight, lifted up and hang in the air without any thing to support it, we would conclude it a miracle. What think you when all the lead, and iron,

and

and brass, and stone that is in the world, hang in the air without any visible stay?

I find some interpreting this clause as the former, in a figurative sense, *He shaketh the earth*, that is, States, Kingdomes, and Common-wealths; *And the pillars thereof tremble*; that is, they who seemed to be their strongest supporters tremble and shake. This is a truth, and a profitable one for our meditation. To clear this,

First, We find the earth in Scripture often put for States and Kingdoms (Isa. 24.20.) *The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage, and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall and not rise again.* The earth shall do this: what earth? He doth not mean the natural earth upon which men tread, but the people who tread upon the earth, or that Common-wealth, wherein people are united and governed, these shall reel to and fro, and be removed like a cottage: as if he had said, you thought your State and Kingdome was setled like a strong Castle, but I will take it down, as a man takes down a little cottage, raddl'd only with a few sticks and reeds. Or the meaning of it is, your Common-wealth that hath been founded by the wisdome of so many Law-givers, and is established in so much riches and power, shall be removed as a poor cottage, thorow which every puff of wind findes a passage. The strongest Kingdoms and Bulwarks of the earth, are but as thatcht cottages, when God takes them in hand.

Fundavit legibus urbes.

Secondly, Pillars are as often taken in a political sense, *Psal.* 75.3. *The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved.* How comes it then to pass that they are not utterly destroyed? it follows, *I bear up the pillars of it*; that is, I maintain Governours and Magistrates, some in places of power and authority, by whom shaking, tottering Kingdoms are upheld. Our experience teaches us this; We live in a Nation, of which we may say, *Our earth with the inhabitants thereof are dissolved*, we are a broken and a shattered people; yet the Lord bears up our *Pillar*, *the Parliament*, *the politick pillar of our Nation*; we had long ago lain in the dust, if God had not borne up this pillar. The chief counsels of the adversary have been to weaken and undermine, to ruine and pull down this pillar: They (like *Sampson*) have taken hold of our two pillars and bowed themselves with all their might (*Judg.* 16.28.) but neither have they proved *Sampsons*, nor proved us *Philistines*.

Further, There are *Church-pillars* as well as *State-pillars*; men of eminency in knowledge and learning, in parts and piety; these are pillars of the Church of God. So the Apostle calls *James* and *Peter*, Gal. 2.9. As the church it self is the *pillar of truth*: so some particular members are *pillars of truth*, bearing it up, and holding it forth, as pillars do the Laws or Edicts of Princes and Common-wealths. As these Pillars are of Gods setting up, so of Gods bearing up. In great shakings of the earth Common-wealth-pillars tremble, and Church-pillars tremble, yea they would fall did not the Lord sustain them with his hand.

οἱ δοκοῦντες στύλοι εἶναι.

From all, learn the instability of the creature. If that which is the basis or foundation of all outward comforts be so easily shaken and tost up and down, what are the comforts themselves? If Kingdoms and Common-wealths totter, who can stand fast? When the Saints feel the world shake and tremble under them, their comfort is, *They have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken.* Neither men nor devils have any power to shake it, and God will not shake it: nay, with reverence we may speak it, the Lord cannot shake that Kingdome, for it is his own: he cannot doe any thing to his own wrong or dishonour. Earth may, but Heaven shakes not, neither shall any of the pillars thereof tremble for ever.

We have seen two acts of the mighty power of God; first in removing those mountains, those great massie parts of the earth. Secondly, In shaking the whole masse of the earth.

Now the thoughts of *Job* grow higher, and he ascends from earth to heaven, and brings an instance of the power of God there, in the 7*th* verse.

Verse 7. *Which commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars.*

And the instance which he makes in the heaven, stands (as heaven doth to earth) in a direct line of opposition to that which he gave about the earth. The earth in all the parts of it, is a setled, fixed body, and therefore the power of God is clearly seen in causing it to move: but, the Sun is a moveable body, a creature in continual motion; and therefore the power of God is clearly seen in checking and stopping the motion of it. It calls for as strong a hand to make the Sun stand still, as to shake and remove the earth. The staying of that which naturally cannot but move, and

Sicut de natura terræ est immobilitas & quies, ita de naturâ cœli, ut semper moveatur. Aquin.

and the moving of that which naturally cannot but ſtand ſtill, require a like power: and that which ſtands as the earth doth, or moves as the ſun doth, requires an Almighty power to move or ſtay it.

Which commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not.

Which commandeth the Sun.] He deſcribes God in the poſture and language of a King, giving out commands, *He commandeth, God is the Soveraign of the Sun.* Yet the word in the Hebrew is no more, but *he ſaith*, or *he ſpeaks to the Sun*; ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *He ſpeaks to the Sun that it riſeth not*; We, clearly to the ſenſe, *He commandeth the Sun*, Becauſe the Word of God to the creature, is a Law or a Command upon the creature.

יאמר
Dixit, illud dicere eſt cum poteſtate imperandi.

He commandeth the Sun and it riſeth not.

The phraſe implies an ordinary, or a common event. But when was there ſuch a thing as this? How rare are ſuch events? I may ask, Did the Lord ever command the Sun that it ſhould not riſe? Or did ever any day appear, when the Sun did not appear? we may anſwer four or five wayes.

Firſt, Some conceive *Job* ſpeaks of what God can do (as in the former inſtance) not of what he ever did: He never actually gave out his command to the Sun that it ſhould not riſe, but he hath power to doe it, if he pleaſeth. Many things are ſpoken of the power of God as preſently done, which only are things poſſible for him to do. That's a good interpretation of the place.

Non ad factum, ſed ad Dei potentiam refertur, qui ſi velit, poſſit viciſſitudinem ortus & occaſus ſolis tollere. Olymp.

Secondly, We may carry it further, for when he ſaith, *It riſeth not*, we need not take it ſtrictly, as if the Sun were ſtaid from making day at all; but, it may note any ſtop or ſudden diſappearing of the Sun. The Suns riſing is the Suns appearing; and when the Sun diſappeareth, or is hidden, it is to us, as if the Sun were not riſen. Thus God hath actually more then once, given out a command to the Sun, not to riſe. *Lavater* (in his comment upon this place) reports that in the year 1585. *March.* 12*th*, ſuch a darkneſs fell upon the earth, that the fowles went to rooſt at noon, as if it had been Sun ſetting, and all the common people thought the day of judgement was come. That of the Prophet is true in the *letter*, as well as in the *figure* (Amos. 4.13.) *He maketh the morning darkneſs*: And (Chap.5.8.) *He turneth the ſhadow of death*

Non oritur ſol, tantum eſt non apparet, nam et ortus ſolis apparitio quædam eſt. Bold.

death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night. The holy ſtory, records one famous act of God commanding the Sun to ſtand ſtill (*Joſh.* 10.12.) When *Joſhua* was in purſuit of his enemies, he prayed that the day might not haſten down: *Sun ſtand thou ſtill upon Gibeon, and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon, And the Sun ſtood ſtill*, &c. *Joſhua* ſpeaks as if himſelf could command the Sun, *Sun, ſtand thou ſtill*; he talks to the Sun, as to his ſervant, or child, *ſtand ſtill.* It was indeed at the voice of *Joſhua*, but by the word and power of God, that the Sun ſtood ſtill. So the Text reſolves, *There was no day like that before it, or after it* (no day ſo long as that) *that the Lord hearkned to the voice of a man.* So then, the Lord hearkned to the voice of a man, and then the Sun hearkned to the voice of a man: Firſt, the Lord hearkned, and then the Sun hearkned, that is, by a command from God at the requeſt of a man the Sun ſtood ſtill.

Thirdly, It may be underſtood of ordinary eclipſes, which are diſappearings of the Sun: And though they come in a courſe of nature, and are by natural light fore-ſeen many years before they come, yet there is ſomewhat in them, which ſhould fill us with high thoughts of the power of God. And though an eclipſe of the Sun be no miracle, yet God once made, and can again make a miraculous eclipſe. When Chriſt the *Sun of righteouſneſs* was ſhamefully crucified, the Sun in the heavens (as aſhamed to look upon that act (as from man) of prodigious cruelty and injuſtice) hid his face; *and from the ſixth houre* (that is, from high-noon) *there was darkneſs over all the land unto the ninth houre*; that is, till three in the afternoon, *Math.* 27.45. The eclipſe was miraculous; firſt, becauſe it was the full of the moon. Which (as we receive from *Antiquity*) cauſed a great Philoſopher (not knowing what was doing, or who was ſuffering at *Jeruſalem*) to cry out *Either the God of nature ſuffers, or the frame of nature diſſolves.*

Dionyſius Areopagita.

2. Becauſe it was univerſall (as ſome affirm) over all the world, or as others (which makes it more ſtrange) that it was only in the land of *Judea*, all the world beſides enjoying the light of the Sun at that time. Which miracle ſtands oppoſite to that in *Egypt*, which was plagued with darkneſs, when the *Iſraelites* in *Goſhen* enjoyed light; whereas then *Judea* where the *Iſraelites* dwelt, was covered with darkneſs, the reſt of the world enjoying light.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Some refer this speech of *Jobs* to that particular plague of darkness, for three dayes in *Egypt* (last mentioned) which they conceive was then fresh in memory, and so *Job* had reference especially unto that, when he saith, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not.* For though God at that time did not give a command to stop the Sun from rising upon all parts of the earth, yet he commandeth the Sun not to rise upon that part; when his own people had light in *Goshen*, the Lord charged the Sun not to rise upon the *Egyptians*; this is a more distinct act of the power of God. For, as he speaks, *Amos* 4. 7. (to note the accurateness as well as the power of God in his judgments) concerning the rain, I *commanded the clouds* (saith he) *and I caused it to rain upon one City, and caused it not to rain upon another City*: So the Lord can cause the Sun, if he please, to rise upon one Country, and not upon another; upon one Nation, and not upon another; upon one City, and not upon another. Thus we may understand it, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not* upon one people, though it shineth upon others, according to the manner of that *Egyptian* plague.

Lastly, We may interpret it of any extraordinary tempestuous time, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not*; that is, he makes such storms and tempests, and causeth such vapours and clouds in the air, that the Sun is muffled up, and is as if it did not rise. Such a day (he means it of any troubles and afflictions) we have described in the Prophet *Joel* (Chap. 2. 2.) *A day of darkness, and of gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the morning upon the mountains.* But how is a day of darkness as the morning? *&c.* The speech intends thus much, that this darkness shall spread it self as suddenly as the morning light spreads it self upon the mountains, which being highest, are blest and gilded with the first issuing rayes of the rising Sun. God is said to command the Sun not to rise, when he vails and masks the face of the Sun with suddain clouds, as if there were no Sun at all but clouds. *Paul* in his voyage to *Rome*, was under such a tempest, and the Text saith, *That neither Sun nor Star for many dayes appeared* (Acts 27. 20.) they were as if the Sun had not risen for many dayes. Such stormy gloomy weather God can make, (*Ezek.* 32. 7.) *When I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark, I will cover the Sun with a cloud*; that is, I will put a black vail or cloak upon the heavens, that the Sun shall not

put

put out any light when I put them out; when I extinguish thee I will (for a time) extinguish the Sun also. The constellations of Heaven are often expressed sympathizing with the dispensations of God on earth, *Isa.* 13. 10. *Joel* 2. 31. *Mat.* 24. 29. *He commandeth or speaketh to the Sun.* Observe hence,

First, *The bare word of God is a command.*

Os in Scriptura pro voluntate sæpe accipitur, significat enim locutionem, locutione enim homines quid volunt manifestant. פה.

He speaketh to the Sun, and it riseth not. The Apostle useth that word about the creation of light, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *The Lord who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts:* the Greek is, *The Lord who spake light out of darkness,* which we translate, *The Lord who commanded the light out of darkness.* The words of God are Laws, and therefore the *ten Commandements,* that part of the word which carries the name of commands from all the rest, is yet called, *The ten words of God.* The Greeks call the ten Commandements, the *Decalogue,* or the *ten words*; so many words, so many commands. The devil seems to acknowledge this great power of God (only that he might abuse it) in Christ, that his word was a command, *If thou be the Son of God* (Mat. 4. 3.) *command that these stones be made bread:* The Greek is, *If thou be the Son of God speak to these stones that they become bread,* or *speak these stones into bread:* He would take that as a proof of his Divinity, *If thou be the Son of God, do this*; God can do this, his Word is a command to all creatures, for whatsoever he imposeth upon them, they must submit to it, therefore do thou so likewise, speak to these stones, or command these stones to become bread.

It should be matter of comfort to us, while we remember that every word of God is a command upon all creatures, *He hath made a decree which shall not pass* (Ps. 148. 6.) The Hebrew is only, a word which shall not pass, his word is a decree, which none shall reverse.

Secondly, As from the former clause [*He commandeth the Sun*] we learn, that every word of God is a command: so from that which followeth [*and it riseth not*] We may learn.

That, every creature obeys the command, and submits to the will of God.

Men often speak, and speak in the highest language of commanding, and yet the thing is not done; but whatsoever the Lord speaks is done. Every thing hath an ear to hear his voice, who made both voice and ear, *Psal.* 148. 8. *Fire and hail, snow and vapour,*

pour, ſtormy winds fulfilling his Word. Senſleſs creatures act at Gods command, and goe upon his errand, *They fulfill his Word.* The Lord ſent a meſſage unto *Hezekiah*, to aſſure him that his ſickneſs was at his command, becauſe the Sun was, (2 *Kings* 20. 9, 10.) *Shall the ſhadow go forward ten degrees, or goe backward ten degrees in the diall of Ahaz?* either way (ſaith the Lord) I can doe it either way, as thou ſhalt ask a ſign, it ſhall be done. And *Hezekiah* anſwered, *It is a light thing for the ſhadow to goe down ten degrees, but let the ſhadow return backward ten degrees.* Yet he knew the Lord did not offer him a light thing in either, when he ſaid, Shall the Sun goe forward or backward. The Suns going forward was within a degree, as great a matter as it's going backward; but *Hezekiah* calls it a light matter, in regard of common apprehenſion and obſervation. The Suns motion is naturally forward, and though it ſhould mend it's pace, many would not much regard it; but all would ſtand and wonder at a retrograde motion, or at the Sun going backward. Hence *Hezekiah* calls it a light matter for the Sun to goe forward comparatively to it's going backward. And from either the Lord would teach *Hezekiah*, that the creatures will doe what he bids them, even the Sun will move miraculouſly at his Word. How great a rebuke will it be to man, if he move not at the command of God, and as God commands? Shall the Lord ſay to the Sun, Riſe not, and it riſeth not; and ſhall he ſay to man, Swear not, and he will ſwear; pray, and he will not pray: ſhall the Lord have better obedience from creatures without life then from man, who hath not only life but reaſon? or from Saints, who have not only reaſon, but grace? They who have grace give not ſuch univerſal obedience as things without life: for though there be a part in them active to obey, yet there is a part in them backward to all obedience. Let it ſhame us that there ſhould be any thing in us (who have life, reaſon, and grace (reſiſting, or not readily complying with all the commands of God, when the Sun, which hath not ſo much as life, obeyes his voice, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not.*

Thirdly; Obſerve from the manner of this ſpeech.

That, The Lord hath a negative voice upon the motion of all creatures.

He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not. It is a royall Prerogative that the Lord commands the Sun to riſe, but that the

Lord hath a power to ſtay the Sun from riſing, lifts up his Prerogative to the higheſt. In all diſputes about power, his is reſolved to be greateſt, who hath the negative voice, which checks and ſuperſedeats all others. This is the Prerogative of God; he can ſtay the motion of the Sun, and of man. The Sun dares not do his office to the day, nor the ſtars to the night, if the Lord ſay, No. The Sun is deſcribed, *Pſal.* 19. 5. like a bridegroom coming out of his Chamber dreſt and prepared, and as a Giant rejoycing to run his race; but though the Sun be thus prepared, and dreſt, and ready, yet if the Lord ſend a writ, and prohibition to the Sun to keep within his chamber, he cannot come forth, his journey is ſtopt. Thus alſo he ſtops man in his neareſt preparations for any action. *If the Lord ſhall work, who ſhall let it?* Iſa. 43. 13. That is, there is no power in heaven or earth which can hinder him. But if the Lord will let, who ſhall work? neither Sun, nor ſtars, nor men, nor devils can work, if he forbid them. The point is full of Comfort. God tels *Abimelech* in the caſe of *Sarah*, *Abrahams* wife, whom he took into his houſe, *I know that thou didſt it in the Integrity of thy heart, but I with-held thee, and I ſuffered thee not to touch her* (Gen. 20. 6.) And when *Laban* purſued *Jacob* with hard thoughts againſt him, and ſtrong reſolutions to deal harſhly with him; The Lord gave a negative voice, (*Gen.* 31. 24.) *Take heed that thou ſpeak not to Jacob either good or bad.* *Laban* had not the uſe of his own tongue; *He could not ſpeak either good or bad.* Not good or bad! Was there any hurt for *Laban* to ſpeak good to *Jacob?* And the ſtory tells us, that *Laban* ſpake many words, and ſome bad enough to *Jacob*, charging him with double theft. Firſt, for ſtealing himſelf away (verſ. 27.) *Wherefore didſt thou ſteal away from me?* Secondly, for ſtealing his Idols (verſ. 30.) *And now though thou wouldeſt needs be gone, becauſe thou longeſt ſore after thy fathers houſe, yet wherefore haſt thou ſtoln away my Gods?* Foul language all, though God charged him not to ſpeak a bad word to *Jacob*. For anſwer know, We muſt reſtrain that reſtraint to the point of bringing *Jacob* back again, *Thou ſhalt not ſpeak either good or bad to him*, to ſtop or turn him from his way, thou ſhalt uſe no threatnings to bring him back to thee, no, nor any promiſes or allurements: thou ſhalt make no offers of better entertainment to win him to thy ſervice, which was the thing he ſo much deſired. *Good and bad* are the two terms of all that can be ſpoken, and where the utmoſt extreams of ſpeaking are forbidden, all ſpeaking to that purpoſe is

forbidden.

forbidden. When the ancient people of God *were few in number, yea, very few, and strangers in the land, when they went from one Nation to another, from one Kingdome to another people*, one would think, that all the world would have been upon them; but here was their protection, God had a negative voice (Psal. 105. 15.) *He suffered no man to doe them wrong.* Many had (as we say) an aking tooth at the people of God, their fingers itcht to be dealing with them, and the text shews four advantages the world had against them: First, they were few. Secondly, Very few. Thirdly, Strangers. Fourthly, Unsetled. What hindered their enemies? It was the Lords *negative voice. He reproved Kings for their sake, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and doe my prophets no harm.* We see an instance of this (*Gen.* 35.5.) when *Jacob* and his family *journeyed, the terrour of God was upon the Cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob:* they had a minde to pursue after them, to revenge the slaughter of the *Sichemites*, but God said *Pursue not*, and then they could not pursue, they must stay at home. And when all his people the *Jews* were safe in *Canaan*, he incourages them to come up freely to worship at *Jerusalem*, by this assurance, No man shall desire thy Land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God, thrice in the year (*Exod.* 24.34.) God can stop not only hands from spoiling, but hearts from desiring. Our appetite, whether concupiscible or irascible, is under his command, as well as our actions. The Prophet asserts this by way of question (Lam. 3.37.) *Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?* That is, if the Lord doth not concur, if the Lord vote against the saying or command of any man in the world, what he saith shall never come to passe.

We should consider this to help our faith in these times. God hath a negative voice upon those counsels and conclusions, which are carried with one consent of men, *And the wrath of man shall either turn to his praise, or all that is beyond that* he will stop, *the remainder of wrath*, (namely, so much as remains over and above what turns to the praise of God) *shalt thou restrain*, Psal. 76.6. The sword is in motion amongst us, even as the Sun, and the sword seemeth to have received a charge to pass from one end of the Land to the other; yet a counter-command from God will stop this sword from going on. If he speak to the sword, the sword shall wound no more. We may entreat the sword to wound no

more, as they (*Jer.* 47. 6.) cried out, *O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be are thou be quiet? put thy self into thy scabbard, rest and be still.* The answer was, *How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it charge against Askelon?* &c. Our answer might be (changing place) the same, How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against *England?* A word from God draws, and a word from God sheaths the sword. He that commands the Sun, and it riseth not, can command the sword, and it smiteth not, the fire and it burns not, the water and it drowns not, the Lions and they devour not: How happy are they who serve the Lord over all!

Observe fourthly, seeing, *He commandeth the Sun and it riseth not,*

That, The daily rising of the Sun, is an act of Grace and favour to the world.

The Sun doth not rise alone of it self, it is the Lord (as we may say) that helps it up every morning. Therefore it is said (*Mat.* 5. 45.) *He makes his Sun to rise*; *His Sun*, mark, how Christ speaks of the Sun, as Gods own, that Sun which he can either cause to rise, or not to rise, cause to rise upon one people, *and not* upon another, *He makes his Sun to rise*; there is an act of common grace in making it to rise upon any, especially in making it to rise upon all, upon *the evil, and upon the good*, Mat. 5. 41. That God makes the Sun rise to give them light, who use their eyes only to rebell against the light, how admirable is it?

Lastly, As to the speciall aim of *Job*, we see what a proof we have of the omnipotency of God, *He is great in power, and mighty in strength*; Why, because he can stop the Sun? He that can stay the Sun, what can he not doe? We say to men that attempt impossibilities, *Climb up to the Moon*; it is more to stay the Sun, than to climb the moon. And if the Lord be able to overcome this difficulty, what difficulty can he not over come? Here's a clear proof of the infinite power and wisdome of God, *He speaks to the Sun, and it riseth not.* And

He sealeth up the stars.

Qui efficit nostem & diem, nam donec oritur sol est, nox et adveniente die, quasi obsignatæ occultantur stellæ. Ju.

The Sun is the light of the day, the stars the light of the night. *He sealeth up the stars.* Some take it to be a *Periphrasis*, or a description of night and day, because till the Sun riseth it is night, and when

when day appears, the ſtars are ſealed up, or diſappear: The Sun riſeth, and the ſtars are obſcured, we ſee them not: So the former clauſe, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not*, is a deſcription of the night, and this latter, he ſealeth up the ſtars, is a deſcription of the day. The plain ſenſe of both being this, *He maketh both night and day.*

Secondly, (ſay others) This ſeal is ſet upon the Sun, in behalf of the ſtars, *He ſealeth up the Sun for the ſtars*; that is, in favour of the ſtars; that the ſtars might ſometime appear in their luſtre and glory to the world; he keepeth the Sun from appearing.

Pro ſtellis ſignavit (ſc. ſolem) ſignaculo, quaſi in favorem ſtellarum Deus continet ſolis ſplendorem in altero Hæmiſpherio. Cajet.

But (as we tranſlate) we may better keep the ſeal upon the ſtars, *He ſealeth up the ſtars.*

And ſo, ſealing may import either of theſe two things.

Firſt, The ſafe cuſtody of the ſtars, *He ſealeth up the ſtars*; that is, he preſerveth the ſtars in their orbs, in the places where he hath ſet them, they ſhall never drop out. Sealing is often uſed for aſſurance and ſafe-keeping. *Darius* (Dan. 6.) ſealed the ſtone upon the den of Lions, that ſo *Daniel* might not be reſcued or fetcht out from the danger. The Jews, that they might keep Chriſt faſt enough, ſeal'd the ſtone of the ſepulchre, wherein his body was laid (*Mat.* 27.) And in a ſpirituall ſenſe, the ſealing of the Spirit, is to make the ſoul ſafe in the love and favour of God. A ſoul that is ſealed by the Spirit of God, is ſecured of the love of God, and ſhall never drop out of his heart. So, He ſealeth up the ſtars, is, He makes the ſtars firm and faſt in their Sphears. But rather,

Annulos non tam ornatus quam cuſtodiæ gratia olim inventos dicit. Macrobius *l.* 7. Saturn. *c.* 3.

Secondly, Sealing is for ſecreſie, or for the hiding of a thing from the ſight of others: So in the ſealing of letters, that they be not ſeen, and of treaſures, that they be not ſtoln or taken away, *Deut.* 32. 34. *Job* 14. 17. Thus the Lord ſeals up the ſtars, when he clouds or obſcures the ſtars, and will not let them be ſeen. Some make it an alluſion to a book. The heavens are a great volume, wherein many truths of God are written, his name is there; and the ſtars are as ſo many characters or letters of his Name. He often ſeals up this great volume, and ſo blots theſe letters that no man can read or diſtinguiſh them.

Clauſæ videntur, cum non videntur. Stellæ et omnia cœli lumina, velut characteres quidam efficiunt librum. Pined.

Thirdly, The meaning of, *He ſealeth up the ſtars*, may be taken thus, He keeps in, and cloſes up the vertue and influences of the ſtars; he ſtops thoſe treaſures, which uſually come down from the ſtars upon the earth. Naturall Philoſophy teaches us, that all the fatneſs and fruitfulneſs of the earth, is conveyed from the hea-

vens.

vens. Heaven nurſes and ſuckles the earth: and if the Lord pleaſe he can dry up thoſe breaſts, ſeal up thoſe influences, ſtop thoſe ſecret workings which the heavenly bodies have upon the earth. Obſerve hence,

That the influences of the heavens are in the hand of God, to let them out, or ſtay them as he pleaſeth.

As he can ſeal up the ſpirituall treaſures of heaven, that the ſoul ſhall receive no light, comfort or refreſhing from them in Ordinances; ſo he ſeals up the naturall influences of the heavens, that the earth and the fruits of it here below ſhall receive no quickning, no refreſhing from them. And the earth languiſhes when the Lord ſuſpendeth and ſealeth up the naturall influences of heaven, as the ſoul languiſheth, when the Lord ſtops up the ſpiritual influences of heaven, when he ſeals up that ſtar of *Jacob*, that day-ſtar from on high, Jeſus Chriſt.

What we hear of God in natural things, ſhould keep us in continual dependance upon him for ſpirituals; he ſeals with the comforts of his own Spirit, and he ſeales up all comforts from our ſpirits.

Verſe 8. *Which alone ſpreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the ſea.*

This verſe gives us a further argument of the mighty power of God. See how *Jobs* diſcourſe moves from earth to heaven, and from the heavens down to the ſea. He ſearches for the wonders of Gods power and wiſdome, in heaven and earth, and in the waters. Before he ſhews God ſtopping the courſe of the Sun, and ſealing up the ſtars; now ſpreading out of the heavens, and treading upon the ſea.

He ſpreadeth out the heavens.

The heavens in reference to the earth, are the upper part of the world. The heavens are (as it were) the roof of the great houſe, which God made, or as a ſpangled Canopy over our heads, *He ſpreadeth out the heavens*; The word is of the *Duall number* in the Hebrew, and hath divers derivations, which are conſiderable to enlighten us in the point.

He ſpreadeth out the heavens.

שמאיים
א שם

Some derive it from *Shem*, which ſignifies a name, a name of honour

honour and dignity, *Men of Name* are men of renown (*Gen.* 6.4.) the heavens are the most glorious, beautifull and renowned part of the Creation; Their name is above every name of inanimate creatures.

Nomen, gloria, decus, quia cœlum est nominatissima pars mundi. Martin. in Lex. Philos. Anshi Hashem.

Others, because there are waters above in these heavens, derive the word from (*Sham*) which is an adverb of place, and (*Majim*) which signifies waters; as much as to say, *there are waters*, or there is a place, where God hath fountains and stores of water. All his waters are not upon the earth, he hath waters and springs in heaven.

Paulus Fagius in Gen. 1.

A third takes it for a simple, not a compound word, being neer the *Ishmaelitish* word *Shama*, noting only superiority in place, high or above.

A fourth opinion derives it from *Schamem*, which signifies, *to be amazed*, or to make one at a stand with wonder: And the reason is given, because the heavens are such a vast, stupendious body, that if a man look upon them exactly, they will amaze him. Who can observe the Sun, Moon and Stars, and not wonder, and be transported, at their vastness and beauty, at the swiftness and regularity of their motions; it is above the reach and apprehension of naturall reason, how the Lord should fashion and spread out such heavens.

שמאים à שמם *Obstupuit, propter insignem vastitatem istius corporis, quæ ipsa nos aspicientes in stuporem rapit.* Pisc. in Gen. 1.

But what are these heavens which he spreadeth forth?

Heaven is somtimes expressed with an addition, *the highest heavens*, *the third heavens*, in 2 Cor. 12.12. *The heaven of heavens*, 1 King. 8.27. *Paul* was wrapt up to *the third heavens*, that is, in visions and revelations he was brought as near to God himself, as a creature possible can. Of this heaven we are to understand that, *Gen.* 1.1. where *Moses* saith; *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was without form and void.* He doth not say, the heaven which God created at first, was without form and void, but the earth was without form and void; for that heaven was a perfect creature. We read further of the creating of those heavens which we see, of the visible heavens, which are the continent of the Sun, Moon and Stars. But, *In the beginning God created the heaven*; that heaven which by way of eminency is called, *The habitation of his holiness, and his glory*, Isa. 63. 15. This was created in the beginning, and then, it is conceived the Angels were likewise created; but the earth which was then made was an imperfect creature, and all other corporall creatures with their

their several forms and fulness were extracted out of that earth, which was *without form and void.* The very heavens (which we see) were made out of that first earth, Sun, Moon, and the Stars, yea, the very light it self was made out of that earth, that general heap of matter which the Lord created at first, and is said to have been *without form and void.* But the heaven, which we call *the heaven of heavens*, *the third heaven*, or *the highest heaven*, was a perfect creature the first day, made without any pre-existent matter whatsoever by the power of God. This heaven is the largest of all the heavens which God spread out.

Secondly, Take heavens for the visible heavens. I intend not to stay upon phylosophical considerations, only what the Scripture holds forth; we find heavens put, first for the starry heavens or the firmament, where the stars have their motion, that's the heaven meant (*Gen.* 1.17. *Psal.* 8.7. *Psal.* 19.1.) This, according to the doctrine of Astronomers, is distinguished into severall Orbs and Sphears, in seven of which seven special stars are said to move, and all the rest to be fixed in the eighth.

The Apostle *Jude* seems to give a hint of those planeticall Orbs (*Jude v.* 13.) where he justly reproacheth unsetled spirits by the name of *wandring stars or planets, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.*

Thirdly, Heaven is taken in Scripture for a nearer heaven, for all that which is below the Moon, for the air and the clouds. Hence the birds are said to flie in the heavens; and (*Gen.* 8.2.) the rain from heaven was restrained, that is, the rain from the clouds, for there is no rain in that heaven above the clouds.

Triplex est cœlum aerium sidereum ac aliud his superius, invisibile et divinum. Dam. l. 2. de orthodoxa fide.

Heaven is a building of three stories. The first story is the air and the clouds up to the moon. The second story reaches all the planets and stars. The third story is also called, *the third heaven*, or the heaven of heavens, the place of his most glorious residence, who filleth heaven and earth.

All these heavens the Lord spreadeth out.

There is a threefold spreading forth of a thing.

First, By contusion or beating with hammers, as a mass of gold or silver, &c. is spread into thin plates or leaves.

Secondly, by way of rarefaction or attenuation; water is rarefied by fire, and so are metals, when they are melted or caused to run with extream heat. In allusion to which, *Elihu* speaks in his challenge to *Job* (Chap. 37.18.) *Hast thou with him spread out the*

skie

skie which is strong, and as a molten looking-glass. The skie is of a weak, sleight matter, not hard, massie, or elemental, yet *it is strong*; and the nature of it being incorruptible, the figure of it round and indissoluble. And it is compared to a looking-glass, for the clearness of it; those instruments were made, some of glass, some of steel or brass, molten and polisht for that purpose.

Thirdly, A thing is spread forth by unfolding the parts, as a tent or a curtain is spread: and thus the spreading of the heavens is described, *Psal.* 104. 1, 2. *O Lord, thou art cloathed with honour and majesty, thou stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.* God took the vast matter folded together, and spread it as a curtain, tabernacle or tent. And the * Latine word which carries the interpretation of this in the Hebrew, is frequently applied by ancient Authours, to the pitching of tents in war. In this third sense we are specially to understand the Text, *Alone spreadeth out the heavens.*

נטה

Extendit, dilatavit, sicut tentorium.

* *Hic dolatum manus, hic sævus tendebat* Apollo. Virg. 2 Æniad. *Juxta hortos tendebat.* Suet. *in* Galb *c.* 12 d. Germanorum. *Cohorte. Et milites tendere omnes extra vallum jussit* Tac. *l* 13.

And so this spreading is either an exposition of the nature of the heavens (*Gen.* 1. 8.) *The Lord said let there be light in the firmament*; the Hebrew is * *Let there be an expansion*, or a stretching forth. These heavens are so much spread forth, that they are called, *a thing spread forth*; and so the text is a description of the heavens in their first Creation. Or, it may refer to the words going before, and so these are a reason to shew that God can command the Sun, and seal up the stars, why? *He spreadeth forth the heavens*; that is, the heavens are all of his making, and at his disposing; he set the Sun there, and pnt the stars there, he fashioned the orbs in which they are placed, and therefore he can stay the Sun, and seal the stars.

* *Cœlum sive firmamentum vocatur* רקיע *eo quod est expansum & extensum super terram Solus sine cujusquam ilio.*

And as he thus spreadeth out the heavens, so, which is more observable, *He spreadeth them out alone.* When a piece of hangings or the like of a large extent is to be spread forth, one man cannot doe it, many hands are put to that work. It is an axiome in Divinity, *that no creature can be an instrument in Creation*: this stretching forth of the heavens, is an act of Creation, therefore *he alone* doth it, there is none to help him.

Instrumentum creationis creatura esse non potest.

Yet we find that God had some other with him, when he stretched out the heavens, though it be here attributed to him alone: and though *Elihu* expostulates with *Job* in this point (Chap 37. 18.) *Hast thou with him spread out the skie which is strong, and as a molten looking-glass? Elihu* would bring down the thoughts of *Job*,

which he conceived were too much lifted up, by shewing that God did this alone; *Job* (saith he) didst thou hold one part of this great Curtain or Canopy of heaven in thy hand, and God another, and was it so spread out between you? No, neither man nor angel was his helper; who then was with God in this work? *Solomon* tells us, (*Prov.* 8.27.) *When he prepared the heavens I was there, when he set a compass upon the face of the depth.* Who was that? *I wisdome was there. Jesus Christ was there.* Christ was he by whom God prepared and stretched forth the heavens. No creature was there, only the uncreated, creating Son of God. God created alone, that is, without the help of any creature; but he created all things by the *Word, and the word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made.* Observe from hence,

Solus, quia nemo extra ipsum cum ipso, sed una cum ipso illi qui in ipso per identitatem substantiæ sunt; verbo enim Domini sunt cœli, & spiritu oris ejus omnis virtus eorum Solum enim divinitas facit, quæ ut una ita & sola.

First, *The heavens are as the royal Tent and pavilion of the* Lord. *He spreadeth them out.* The Lord is often expresst coming out of the heavens with warlike preparations: There his tent is pitcht, and he sitteth there, as a great Commander in his pavilion, to give out orders to his Armies. He hath an host in heaven, and therefore he hath a tent in heaven; or rather heaven is his tent. *The Lord hath his way in the whirlewind, and in the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet,* Nah. 1.3. God pitches his battel in heaven; *The stars in their courses fought against Sisera. He fought from heaven*; from thence he discharged his great Artillery, his Cannons thundered and lightned against the enemies of his people. He hath also his store-houses for ammunition, his Magazines there (Job 38. 22.) *Hast thou* (saith God to *Job*) *entred into the treasures of the snow? Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, the day of battel and war?* He speaks of heaven as of a great store-house, where he hath his arms, his powder and ball, all his warlike provision laid up against the day of battel. Heathens have spoken such language, calling storms and tempest, hail and thunder, *The weapons and engines of the Armory of heaven.*

Est alluſio ad armamentaria publica, ubi armorum, machinarum et ornamentorum ingens apparatus reconditur. Bo *Quicquid habent cœlorum armamentaria cœli.* Juven. *Sat.* 13.

Secondly, In that he saith, *He stretcheth out the heavens alone*, observe,

That the Lord needs not the help of any creature to do his greatest works.

He hath power, and he hath power in himself to do what he hath

hath a will should be done; let all the creatures in the world stand still, yet God can carry his work forward. What work is like this, the stretching forth the heavens: There cannot be a work of so much difficulty under heaven, as the spreading forth of the heavens. He, who did that alone, what can he not do alone? Though men will not, though men cannot help, the Lord can and will alone. Isa. 59. 16. *He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessour*; no man to do, no man to speak in that business, not a man appeared: what then? doth the Lord say, well seeing there is no man to do, I also will let it lie? No, *Therefore his arm brought salvation unto him, and his power sustained him*; he did it alone. *Paul* speaks of himself, that at his first appearing before *Nero*, all men forsook him, not a man would own him, but (saith he) *The Lord stood by me* (2 Tim. 4. 15.) This is a great encouragement to us in great affairs and businesses, in the greatest straits and difficulties of the times; if men forsake and desert, the Lord alone can do all for us; if men have not power to do what they have will to do, nor will to do what they have power; then remember, *He that stretcheth out the Heavens alone*, can order our works alone, compose our differences alone, conquer our enemies alone. God alone is infinite, greater, stronger, wiser, then all creatures together. God can be now as he will be hereafter, *all in all unto us*. God is enough for us without any creature; yea, God and all that he hath made cannot do more than God, without any thing that he hath made.

And treadeth upon the waves of the Sea.

The sea is a fluid body; to sail or swim in the waters is ordinary, but to tread upon the waters, that's another act of wonder, *He treadeth upon the waves of the Sea*; or, he walks on them as upon a pavement.

To tread upon the waves imports, that God hath a command over the sea, and the waves of it. To tread upon a thing is to have it under our power, or in subjection to us (*Psal.* 91 13.) the promise is, *Thou shalt tread upon the Lyon, and upon the Asp*; that is, thou shalt prevail and triumph over the greatest evils, over enemies as strong and fierce as Lyons, as poysonous and stinging as the Asp, Psal. 108. 9. *Over Edome will I cast out my shoe*; which notes either contempt of them; as if he had said, I look upon them as worthy only to scrape and make clean my shoes. Or secondly, Conquest

Verbum Darac *ali* \ *quando est doctis præliantis & debellantis hostes. Quasi jure belli sub, jicere.*

over them; I will walk thorow *Edom* and subdue it. *Deut.* 11. 24. *Every place whereon the sole of your feet shall tread shall be yours*; that is, yours shall be conquering feet, you shall tread as Lords upon all lands. Yours shall be all the ground you go on, that is, it shal be subject to you, *Judg.* 5. 21. *O my soul, thou hast troden down strength*; and *Mic.* 1. 3. *The Lord shall tread upon the high places of the earth*; that is, the Lord shall subject the highest things that are upon the earth to his Power. That place is very observable, *Numb.* 24. 17. Where *Balaam* propheſying of Christ, saith (as we translate) *A star shall come out of Jacob*; the Hebrew is, *A star shall tread out of Jacob*, noting Christ a victorious, a triumphant star, who should come treading and trampling upon the world as conquerour; though the world in regard of his out-side trod and trampled upon him: so 'tis explained in the latter words of the verse, *He shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. A star shall tread out of Jacob. A treading star is a triumphing star.*

Calcabit stella è Jacob.

The Hebrew is, *He treadeth upon the high places of the Sea*; the word (*Bamoth*) is used frequently for the places where idolatrous worship was set up, *their high places*. Mr. *Broughton* translates, *the high waves of the sea*; because sea waves rise high, so high, that the Psalmist describes them, *mounting up to the heaven* (Psal. 107. 26.) When these high waves threaten to swallow all, then the Lord treads upon them, that is, his power is above them, and he makes them submit to his command. *As to ride upon the high places of the earth* (Deut. 32. 13. Isa. 58. 14.) is to have highest command, and to be a *chief* upon the earth, or to dwell safely and free from annoyance upon the earth: So to tread upon the high places or high waves of the sea, implies Gods Empire or Soveraignty over the Sea.

במתי

Excelsa maris. Ambulat super altitudinem roboris maris. Tar. Robur Maris dicit vehementiam maris quando à ventis turbatur et commovetur. Dorso immane Jovem mari attribuit. Virg. *Eneiad. l.* 1.

Hence observe, first,

That the sea in its highest rage is at the beck, and under the treadings of God.

When the waves are most stirring and raging, he speakes them quiet, *Psal.* 89. 9. *Thou rulest the raging of the sea, when the waves thereof arise thou stillest them.* As to walk upon the Sea is an argument of a divine power, so to command the Sea. When Christ (*Mat.* 8. 26.) rebuked the sea, and said, as another Gospel hath it (*Mark.* 4. 38.) *Peace and be still*, as if one should hush a child; *The men marvelled, saying, what manner of man is this, that even the*

winds

winds and the sea obey him? winds and waves seem the most disobedient, stubborn and unteachable creatures in the world, yet a word from God calms the one, and smooths the other. When the old *Egyptians* would by their *Hieroglyphicks* express an impossibility, they did it by the picture of a man treading upon the waves; as if they should say, this is as impossible as for a man to walk upon the waves. The Heathen Poets describe *Neptune* their Sea-god, swimming, not walking upon, or treading the waters. To tread upon the waters is so much above man, that meer Naturalists thought it too much for God. Man shews his pride and arrogancy to the height, when he pretends to lord it over the waves of the sea. When the *Hellespont*, a strait of the sea, by a sudden storm rising upon it, broke the bridge of Boats, which *Xerxes* had made to pass into *Greece*, and so opposed the project of *that Persian Monarch*, he cast fetters into it, as if he would teach it to know its Lord, and caused it to be beaten with 300 stripes, to chasten its former disobedience. It is recorded in the hystory of this Nation, concerning *Canute* an ancient *Danish* King, that when a mighty storm of flattery rose upon him, he appeased it by shewing he could not appease the storms of the sea. One of his Courtiers told him in his progress, as he rode near the sea-side, that he was Lord not only of the land, but of the sea, and that all those seas which he saw, were at his command. Well, saith he, we shall see that by and by, and so walked down to the shore, and pulling off his upper garment, wraps it together, and sits upon it neer the flowing of the waves, and with a loud voice speakes thus, *O ye seas and waves come no further, Touch not my feet*, &c. But the sea came up, notwithstanding his charge, and confuted that flattery. God only hath this prerogative, *He treadeth upon the high waves of the sea.*

Egyptij ut rem prorsus impossibilem demonstrarent, hominem pedibus super aquas ambulantem in sua Hieroglyphica depingebant.

Veteres cum suum Neptunum super aquas ambulantem pingere non auderent, à nando ei nomen dederunt. Herod. *l.* 1.

Delectat Canuti regis Anglorum exemplum qui assentantionis procellam, procella maris in se admissa, compescuit. Bold. *ex* Cam. Brit.

Ex alto incitatum fluctum, ita alloquutus est, unda tibi jubeo, ut ne pedes meos targas.

There are also mystical waves, which the Lord treadeth upon: people and Nations are called waters, and many waters, in the book of the *Revelation*. The waves of the Sea cannot be in a greater rage, then the Nations of the earth sometimes are. And the same Hebrew word by which the rage of the sea is properly expresst, expresses also the rage of men (Psal.2. 1.) *Why do the Heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?* Why are the *Gentiles*, the great waters up as high waves, threatning a deluge to the throne of Christ? The power of Christ is as eminent in stilling the rage of the mystical, as of the literall waters; yea, we find

these

theſe two matcht together (*Pſal.* 65. 7.) *He ſtilleth the noiſe of the ſeas, the noiſe of their waters, the tumult of the people.* Hence the Apoſtle *Jude* (verſ. 13.) calls wicked men, *raging waves of the ſea, foaming out their own ſhame. The* Lord *ſitteth upon theſe floods, yea, the Lord ſitteth King for ever*, Pſal. 29. 10.

There are other myſticall waves, even waves within us, which will not be trodden upon by any foot but Gods. There is a ſea of wickedneſs in every mans heart by nature. Every wicked man is nothing but a ſea, he is a ſea of wickedneſs. *The wicked* (Iſa. 57. 20.) *are like the troubled ſea, when it cannot reſt.* And as the windes blow from all quarters of the heavens, and ſtrive upon the ſeas: So there are divers luſts, which as winds ſtrive upon the face of mans heart, the luſt of pride, the luſt of covetouſneſs, the luſts of ambition, of envy, of malice, theſe enrage and ſwell the waters. The Lord treads upon the high waves of this ſea alſo, he reſtrains and keeps luſt down by his power, it would drown all elſe. Theſe raging waves ſwell too high in his own people; it is the work of the Spirit to tread theſe down; and when the windes of ſeveral temptations raiſe thoſe waves, he it is that commands them down. Who amongſt us is there, that one time or other finds not corruption raging, as the high waves of the Sea? How mighty and powerful is the Lord in that great work of his effectual grace, treading upon the waves of this ſea, remaining corruption in his ſervants and children!

Verſ. 9. *Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South.*

In aſtrorum pulchritudine, ſitu, ordine, vi ſtupendiſq; in hæc inferiora operationibus, admirabilis prorſus creatoris magnificentia et magnitudo plurimum elucet. Bol.

In the verſe immediately before, we heard of the power of God in ſtretching out the heavens; and in this we have his excellent skill, and infinite wiſdome diſplayed in adorning, decking and beautifying thoſe heavens which he had ſtretched forth. He hath not only drawn out a vaſt piece of work, like a large Canopy (ſuch are the heavens) but he hath embroidered this Canopy, and ſet it with rich ſparkling ſtones; he hath made ſeveral engravings, images, figures, and repreſentations upon it.

Or we may make the connexion with the latter clauſe of the former verſe. *Job* having ſaid that the Lord *treadeth upon the high waves of the ſea*; that when the ſeas are moſt ſtormy and tempeſtuous, they are at his command, and that their confuſions are under his Empire and order; he adds this verſe by way of anſwer to a poſſible

ſible objection: For ſome might ſay, the motion of the ſeas is from the power and influences of the ſtars, from the riſing and ſetting of the moon, with other plannets and conſtellations. True ſaith *Job*, yet the Lord is he that treadeth upon the waves of the Sea, it is the Lord that orders them, and not the ſtars: Though the ſtars and conſtellations have a dominion over the ſeas in their ebbings and flowings, motions and revolutions, yet there is a Lord who hath power, not only over the ſeas, but over that which overpowers the ſeas, even over the ſtars of heaven. *He maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the Chambers of the South*; which ſtars according to the doctrine of Aſtronomy, have a ſpecial power upon the ſeas.

Cum multa ſint aſtra hominibus et fluctibus infenſa, eorum præcipuè meminit, quorum vis ad ſciendas tempeſtates hominibus magn eſt explorata. San.

Either of theſe wayes we may make the connexion.

Firſt, That *Job* would expreſs the adorning of the heavens, after he had ſpoken of their making and ſtretching forth.

Or ſecondly, He would teach us, that though the heavens work upon the ſeas, yet God works upon the heavens. *He maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South.*

I ſhall endeavour to ſpeak of theſe diſtinctly; the holy Ghoſt giving us ſuch a Text, it is not lightly to be paſſed by: and though here are ſtrange words and uncouth expreſſions, yet we may (I hope) bring them down to an eaſie meaning, and fit them to the underſtanding of the ſimpleſt.

I ſhall touch a little in the general before I come to every one in particular.

Job under theſe names couches many of the ſtars of heaven. A *Star* (according to Phyloſophy) *is the thicker part of its orb or ſphear*; it is thicker then other parts of the heavens; for otherwiſe as it could not hold the light, ſo it could not reflect and ſend forth the light; it could not be a veſſel for light, or a conveyance for light. Light was created the firſt day (*Gen.* 1. 3.) but the lights were created the fourth day (*Gen.* 1. 14.) that is, certain veſſels were created to hold the light. And God ſaid, let there be lights in the firmament of heaven; that is, let the light which is now ſcattered thorow all, be gathered in certain receptacles, fit to keep, and yet fitted to tranſmit and diſperſe it into all parts of the world, *Let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light*, verſe 15.

Stella eſt denſior pars orbis: ideo lucent aſtra, non cæli; quia hi diaphani ſunt, et rari, aſtra autem denſa, eoq; lucem retinentia et reflectentia. Magyr. *Phyſ.*

Of theſe lights or ſtars, ſome are called moving, and others fixed. That's the doctrine of Aſtronomers, and it is the doctrine of the Scrip-

Scripture. The Apostle *Jude* (vers. 13.) calling some *wandering stars*, seems to admit of that distinction of the stars into wandering and fixed. The unfixt or wandering stars are seven, known by their names and motions. These in the text are none of them; these are placed above them.

The seat of these *Asterismes*, is in the eighth sphear (to take that doctrine for granted, though many dispute it) or story of the heavens (so the Prophet *Amos* speaks, Chap. 9. 2. *He buildeth his stories in the heavens*; we put in the margent, sphears, *he buildeth his sphears in the heavens*, which being one above another, are elegantly called the stories of heaven) I say in the eighth sphear innumerable stars are fixed: Some of which fall under special observation and numeration. Astronomers give us a Catalogue of a thousand three and twenty stars, which they exactly distinguish; which is the ancient account. And since that, we have had many more discoveries by those noble Navigators, who have made *thorow lights to the world*, that the East might look into the West, and the South into the North: The travel study and experiments of these Masters in Navigation have brought us in an additional number of three hundred stars more. And so reckon a thousand three hundred, and twenty three fixed stars known by name; of which these in the text are a part.

The other stars are both innumerable and unnameable, beyond number and without name. Hence when the Lord shewed *Abraham* how great his seed should be, he carries him out, and bids him look toward heaven, and tell the stars if he were able to number them, *Gen.* 15. 5.

The stars (to come a little nearer the Text) observed and numbred by *Students* in this great volume of the heavens, are distinguish.d into *fourty and one Images or representations*, whereof some (for learnings sake) are fancied the images of men and women, others the images of beasts and fishes, others the images of things without life. Of these images, twelve are in the *Zodiack*, commonly called the *twelve Signs*. In the Southern part of the sphear eleven of those signs are placed, and in the Northern eighteen, which added to twelve in the Zodiack, make up the number of fourty and one.

Omnes hæ stellarum imagines non tantum ordine et situ, verum etiam certis nominibus inter se distinctæ sunt.

Now when it is said in the text, *That God maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South*, we are not to take them for so many distinct & particular stars, but for constellations, or configurations, because they stand in such a form or figure:

and

and ſo for the better knowledge of them they are called by the names of ſuch creatures as they ſeem to repreſent.

We have three of thoſe ſpeciall figures here in the Text, and one more generall. *Arcturus*, *Orion* and *Pleiades* are three figures, or ſtarry repreſentations in the eighth ſphear. I will open their Hebrew names. As alſo the Latine and Greek names, uſed commonly in tranſlations, by which we ſhall get a clearer underſtanding in the nature of the things themſelves.

Which maketh Arcturus.

The word *Gneſh* in Hebrew, ſignifies a meeting or congregating of many things together, becauſe in that one, many ſtars, are joyned. *Arcturus* in Greek is as much as to ſay, *The tail of the Bear*, becauſe the ſtars called *Arcturus* ſtand in a figure like the tail of a Bear.

עש *Congregare, conglobare, huic reſpondet Græcum verbum* συνοδεύειν, *quod eſt, commeare, vel undiquaq; convenire. Arcturus ſtella eſt cauda minoris urſæ, & Septentrio dicitur, παρὰ τὴν τῆς ἀρκτου οὐρὰν, ab urſinæ caudæ ſimilitudine.*

The ſecond *Aſteriſme*, which we tranſlate *Orion*, is called in the Hebrew (*Cheſil*) and that ſignifies either conſtancy or inconſtancy (the ſenſe runs both wayes) ſettledneſs or variableneſs. And it is applied to this ſtar or conſtellation in either ſenſe.

כסיל *Conſtantiam, robur, vel inconſtantiam ſignificat, quod ejus ortus tempeſtatibus orbem varie turbat.* Bold.

Firſt, For conſtancy or ſetledneſs, becauſe there is much ſtrength in the influences of that conſtellation.

Or, ſecondly, For inconſtancy and unſetledneſs, becauſe it is obſerved, that upon the riſing of this ſtar, there is much variety, changeableneſs and unſetledneſs in the weather. Hence the *Jews* call that month which anſwers to our *November*, or the ninth month, *Chiſlu* (Zec. 7. 1.) becauſe that month was uſually very ſtormy and the weather changeable, *Orion* then ariſing in their *Hæmiſphear*. The *Arabick* word (*Algeuſe*) by which this *Aſteriſme* is named, ſignifies a *warriour*; and the Chaldee (*Algebar*) a *Giant*, all aiming at the furious, boiſterous winds which uſually attend the appearing of this conſtellation. And ſo the Greek word from which *Orion* cometh, ſignifies to trouble or to diſturb. And its uſuall Epithetes are *bold*, *vehement*, *impetuous Orion*, all betraying its unquiet and various temper.

Unde November *Hæbraicè dicitur* Chiſlu, *ab ortu Orionis, quod eo menſa magna ſit Cæli inconſtantia: Arabicè vocatur* Algeuſe, *i. e. bellator; à Chaldæis* Algebar, *i. e. Gigas* βεβαιος & δεινὸν. *Audax, vehemens, ardens Orion.* Plin. *lib.* 18. *cap.* 15. δοιὼ *Græcis eſt turbo, concito.* Pagn. *in Theſ. Dum pelago deſævit hyems & aquoſus Orion.*

The third ſtarry aſſociation we call *Pleiades*, the Hebrews, *Chimah*. This is a very cold conſtellation. The Greeks expreſs winter by

Quidam Pleiades dictas putant, quaſi πλεῖαι, *i. e. plures, quod nunquam ſingulæ appareant.* *Pleiades, ἀπὸ τοῦ πλεῖν, navigare* χεῖμα.

by this word, becauſe it brings in froſt and cold with it. The derivation of the Hebrew name is very obſcure. Some profeſſedly acknowledge their ignorance, that they cannot tell how to derive it, yet ſome dig the root of it in the Chaldee, ſignifying *firm*, Others in the Hebrew, ſignifying *to deſire*, or *earneſtly to wiſh for a thing*; and the reaſon of it is (ſay they) becauſe theſe ſtars (the *Pleiades*) the ſeven ſtars we often ſpeak of, are much deſired by Seamen, for ſeeing them, they have a perfect rule to guide and ſteer their courſe by. And it is an Obſervation among ſome of the *Rabbins*, that *Noah* had a little window in the top of his Ark, that from thence he might (when the waters began to aſſwage, and the ſtreſs of the deluge was over) look up to the heavens, and know by thoſe ſtars what courſe his Ark made. Thus much we know, that the ſtars are the Sea-mens night-guide, and the riſing of ſome of them falls under their more ſpeciall obſervation.

The fourth title of the ſtars is, * *The Chambers of the ſouth.* And why, *The Chambers of the South?* The continent is put for the things contained. The word which we tranſlate *Chambers*, ſignifies any thing that is very inward or retired, and therefore tranſlated a chamber, *Judg.* 15. 1. and *Cant.* 3. 4. Mans ſpirits is thus expreſſed, becauſe it lies ſo far inward (Prov. 24. 4.) *By knowledge ſhall the Chambers be filled*; that is, the moſt ſecret parts of the ſoul ſhall be filled by knowledge, *Prov.* 18. 8. *The inward part of the belly.* Prov. 7. 27. *They goe down to the chamber of death*; that is, to the inmoſt and moſt retired wayes of death, the grave. Here, *The chambers of the South* are the moſt remote, hidden and ſecret parts of the South. And the reaſon why after he had expreſt the other conſtellations by ſpeciall names, he gives us theſe only in generall [*The chambers of the South*] is, becauſe the ſtars which are under the Southern pole, are hidden from us, and are encloſed & lodged as in a chamber. God locks them up in his treaſury, and they are ſecrets to this place of the world; the ſouthern Pole being under or below our Horizon. In the artificiall ſphears of heaven we find few Aſteriſmes or deſcriptions of the ſtars about thoſe parts; there are many, but we perceive them not. And the vertue & operation of theſe chambered, hidden ſtars, is as ſtrong, as of thoſe, which appear in the greateſt luſtre and beauty.

Again, When he ſaith, *Which maketh Arcturus*, &c. his meaning is, *Which makes them appear*, or do their office. Theſe ſtars were made when the heavens were made; and *Jobs* diſcourſe is not about

Cur vocatur Chimah libenter fateor me neſcire. Bold. Quidam deducunt à קום *Chaldaicum, quod denotat rem elevatam ſtabiliter et in ſublime firmiter erectam, quia eſt inſtar cardinis, quaſi polus aut vertex mundi. Alij a* כמח *quod eſt deſiderare, in rem aliquam tendere, quia Nautæ affectant videre hoc ſignum,* * הדרי תימן *Interiora auſtri. Nam Deus ex ipſis promptuariis, quaſi de theſauris ſuis quoſdam educit ventos, et per ipſos mirabiles ſiderum illorum influxus, intelligit æſtiva ſidera, ut eſt Canicula, &c. Quæ quia ad Polum Antarcticum ſpectant (qui velut interior ſubeſt Horizonti noſtro) penetralium Auſtri ſidera vocantur, quaſi in penetralibus mundi a nobis abſcondita.*

bout creation, but providence. So that to make *Arcturus*, &c. in the sense of this Text, is only this, to order the times of their rising and setting, to distinguish the seasons of the year, and to produce their severall effects in every season, which providentiall acts are here especially aimed at. Thus *he maketh Arcturus* to rise, about the middle of *September*, which is the time of the *Equinox*, when the civil day and night are even, and share the hours of the naturall day equally between them. Or, as others account, this star rises about eleven dayes before the *Equinox*. So, by *Arcturus* we may understand that season of the year: *And he maketh Arcturus*, is, he orders and disposeth of the season, commonly called *Autumn*. *Orion* shines forth in our *Hemisphear*, about the month of *December*, and by that, winter is designed. The *Pleiades* begin at the spring, therefore called *Vergiliæ*, because they arise (*vere*) in the spring, and disappear or go down toward winter. *The chambers of the South*, are fiery stars, which have their chief influence upon us in heat of Summer.

And so we may put the Text into these plain expressions, *He maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South*. That is,

First, He makes and orders *Summer, and Winter, Spring and Harvest*, because these stars divide the four seasons of the year.

Or, secondly, thus, *He makes hot and cold, wet and dry, storm and calm.*

Or, thirdly, as these four constellations are assigned to the four chief points of heaven. *Arcturus* is known by all, who know any thing in the heavens, to be seated about the Northen Pole, whose opposites are those stars in *the chambers of the South*. *Orion* dwels in the East, and the *Pleiades* in the West.

So the plain English of the words is this, *that The Lord by his mighty power and wisdom ordereth and appointeth the motions of heaven, from East to West, from North to South.*

Lastly, To clear up the sense of this Text, we must understand these four constellations *Synecdochically*, these being put for all the rest; For as God orders these, so every star in the firmament; the least are under his eye, and at his dispose, as well as the greatest. But because these are the most eminent, usefull and efficacious in their appearances, motions and influences, therefore these are named. *He maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South.*

We may observe from the words thus opened divers profitable instructions.

First, *All the stars are placed in the heavens by the speciall designment of God for the use and good of man.*

Moses (*Deut.* 4. 19.) gives a caution to *Israel* from the Lord, that they should take heed of imitating the Heathens in their abominations, and this is one particular, *Lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the Sun, and the Moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all Nations under the whole heaven.* Observe that, *The Lord thy God hath divided them unto all Nations under heaven*; Therefore take heed that thou do not worship them. They are the work of God, they are creatures; and worship, which is proper to the Creator, must not be given to them. It is a remarkable Text, *Lest* (saith he) *thou shouldest be driven to worship them*, How driven? Not by externall force and power, but driven by the strong inclination of thine heart, ravished with such beautifull objects. The excellency that is in the works of God hath power to draw, yea to drive the heart of man to commit idolatry. *Job* shews this, while he acquits himself so industriously from it (Chap. 31. 26,27.) *If I beheld the Sun when it shined, or the Moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth had kissed my hand, this also were an iniquity to be punished by the Judge*, &c, Some translate that (*Deut.* 4.) in this language of *Job*, *Lest thou be deceived to worship the Sun, Moon and Stars, and hosts of heaven*: this is very considerable: but the thing I chiefly note in that Scripture to the point in hand, is this, That the Lord hath made and appointed the stars to the several parts of the heavens, he hath divided them to all Nations under the whole heavens. Some stars are the portion of one people, others of another. As the earth is an inheritance divided among the children of men; so also are the stars and heavens. We seldom consider what riches we receive from that part of our inheritance; most think they live by the earth only; No, saith *Moses*, *The Lord hath divided the heavens, the Sun, Moon and Stars, unto all Nations under heaven.* He hath settled it, what star such a Land shall have, and in what seasons, as also what proportions of the Sun, and Moon, for light, heat and influence. He hath made them for the children of men. Man is fed and cloathed, warmed and cherished from heaven more then from the earth: the lot and divisions which we have of

Per hanc divisionem intelligit ordinem et motum planetarum, qui in suis orbibus ita disponuntur, ut unaquæque regio suo tempore eorum gaudeat influxibus. Pined.

of the earth, are naturally and usually good or bad, rich or barren, pleasant or unpleasant, healthy or unwholsome, according as the aspects of the heaven and stars, are more or less benigne, or favourable unto them. *Moses* (Deut. 29.26.) reproves the ingratitude of the *Jews* by this argument, *Because they went and served other Gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given to them.* So we translate. But the letter of the Hebrew gives it thus; *who had not given to them, or divided among them any portion.* As if *Moses* had said, The Lord divided and gave the heavens and the stars among you, and these base dunghill-gods never gave you so much as a clod of earth, and will ye depart from *Jehovah* to serve them?

Secondly Observe, *God knoweth the number, the names and the nature of all the stars.*

He gives them speciall names. These in the translation are names of mans imposition. Yet the holy Ghost uses Heathenish names in the new Testament (*Act.* 28. 11.) we read of a Ship, in which *Paul* sailed to *Rome*, whose sign was *Castor and Pollux*, two *Pagan* Sea-gods. It is said, that God brought all the beasts of the earth to *Adam*, that he should give them names; but he brought not the host of heaven to *Adam*, that he should give them names, he named them himself, *Psal.* 147. 4. *He telleth the number of the stars, he calleth them all by their names.* Men are not able to tell the number of the stars; they tell distinctly but to a thousand three hundred, or a few more, and they are not able to tell all these by distinct names, but they are constrained to reckon them by constellations, where a whole family of stars are called by one name. The Lord hath made it his speciall priviledge to tell the number of the stars, and to call them all by their names. And these are named in the Text for all the rest. Observe,

Thirdly, some stars are more excellent, of greater vertue and name then others; when these are named, it is for speciall reason. The Lord nameth these, as stars of more then ordinary dignity. These are in degree next to the Sun and Moon: when a few are named for many, we usually name the chiefest: as the whole people of the Jews are set forth by the heads of their Tribes, by the Chiefs; and when a Nation is spoken of, it is by those greater names, *the Magistrate and the Ministers.* These are named, because they have most to do, and the greatest business in a Nation. So these stars are here named, because they are of speciall use and influence.

influence. The Apoſtle gives us this clearly (1 Cor. 15. 41.) *There is one glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars; for one ſtar differeth from another ſtar in glory.* One ſtar hath a more honourable name then another. Some ſtars God doth not vouchſafe to name particularly to us, when others, which are of greater glory, are. As in a building, ſome parts of it are cheif, *The foundation, the top ſtone, the corner ſtone*; the ſtrength and beauty of the whole building are comprehended under theſe. God hath made differences and degrees in all creatures; in the heavenly as well as earthly. The names of moſt ſtars are conceal-ed, as being of a lower degree. And we find that whenſoever in Scripture ſtars are ſpoken of, ſcarce any are named but theſe, and theſe are often named, which implies their ſuperiority and dignity. The prophet urges this as an argument of humbleſt addreſſes unto, and dependance upon God. (Amos 5.8.) *Seek him that maketh the ſeven ſtars* (that is, *Pleiades*) *and Orion, and turneth the ſhadow of death into the morning*, &c. He doth not ſay, Seek him that ma-keth all the ſtars, the Lord made all. But becauſe he hath given ſo much vertue and excellency to theſe, theſe only are reported as of his making. Here, *Which maketh Arcturus*: (there) *Seek him which maketh the ſeven ſtars*; As if he had ſaid, In thoſe ſtars God hath laid out much of himſelf, and made his power and wiſdome moſt viſible: How much hath God in himſelf, who hath communi-cated ſo much to one ſenſleſs creature?

And though ſtars differ thus one from another, yet they envy not one another. Which leſſons us to be content, though God make our names leſſe named in the world, then the names of many of our brethren; though he truſt more talents to, or put more light into others, then into our ſelves. One ſtar differs from ano-ther ſtar in glory, but no ſtar envies anothers glory.

Fourthly, *Job* being about to declare the power and wiſdome of God, gives inſtance (among other things) in this, *He maketh Arcturus, Orion*, &c. Then obſerve,

The power and wiſdome of God ſhine eminently in the ſtars.

The power and wiſdome of God ſhine in every graſſe that grows out of the ground, yea in every clod of earth, much more then in the ſtars of heaven. Much of God is ſeen in thoſe works of God; yea, ſo much, that many have been drawn to make them gods. There is ſo much of God ſeen in the heavens, that not only Heathens, who had not the true knowledge of God: but his

Covenant-

Covenant-people, who knew him, and whom he knew above all the Families of the earth, have been drawn away to worship the host of heaven. That place before cited (*Deut.* 4.) hinteth as much, *Take heed, lest when thou liftest up thine eyes to heaven, and seest the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, even all the host of heaven, thou shouldest be driven to worship them and serve them.* If thou lift up thine eyes to the stars, and not higher, even to God who made the stars, thou wilt quickly mistake the stars for God, or make the stars thy god; the heart of man is mad upon Idolatry. Read how often the Jews are taxed with this sin, 2 *Kings* 21. 3. and in 2. *Kings* 17. 16. and in *Amos* 5. 26. which clears this truth, that much of the power and wisdome of God is stamped upon the stars; if God did not much appear in the stars, so many had not taken the stars for God, or given them, which is proper and peculiar to God, religious worship.

There are five or six things which shew the power of God and his wisdome in making of the stars.

First, *The greatness of the Stars*; such vast bodies shew an infinite power in there constitution. It is incredible to ordinary reason (unless men have skill and learning to make it out, and to lay the course of nature together) that the stars are so great. The Sun is reckoned by Astronomers to be one hundred sixty six times bigger than all the earth. The Moon indeed, which is called a great light, is thirty nine times less then the earth, yet the magnitude is far beyond common apprehension. Some other of the planets are almost an hundred times bigger then the earth. And whereas the fixed stars are distinguished into six magnitudes, or differences of greatness; Those of the first magnitude (which are many) are conceived to be one hundred and seven times bigger then the whole earth. We look upon a star, as if it were no bigger then the blaze of a Candle, and the Country-man wonders if the Moon be bigger then his bushell, or broader then his Cart-wheel. If the most judicious enter the consideration of these things, they may soon come to amazement, that so many stars in the heavens should be more then an hundred times bigger then all the earth. And if there are such vast bodies in heaven, what a vast body is heaven? That continent must needs be exceedingly exceeding vast, which contains so many exceeding vast bodies in it. If we get but a nook or corner of the earth for our portion, we presently think our selves great men: yet what is all the earth to the heavens?

And

And what are the heavens we ſee to that heaven which is unſeen, to which theſe are but a pavement? The heavens which are to us a roof, are but a floor to the higheſt heavens.

A ſecond thing which ſhews the mighty power and wiſdom of God in the ſtars, *is the multitude of them*, they are innumerable: Man cannot tell them (only God can) they are like the ſand of the ſea for number. A multitude of little ſands make a huge body; then how great a body doe a multitude of great bodies make?

Thirdly, *The ſwiftneſs of their motion*, that theſe mighty vaſt bodies ſhould be carried about every day, ſo long a journey, and never tire or wear, ſhews infinite power and wiſdom.

Fourthly, This is more admirable, the exact order of their motion. That innumerable ſtars ſhould move continually in the heavens, and yet not one of them move out of courſe: this regularity of their motion is ſetled by an *ordinance of heaven* (Jer. 31.35.) where the Lord, to aſſure his people that he would be ſteady and ſteadfaſt in the wayes of his love to them that he would not caſt them off, tels them that he would be as firm to them in his Covenant, as he is in the ordinances of heaven: *Thus ſaith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the Moon and of the Stars for a light by night*, &c. As if he had ſaid, I have made a ſtatute and a degree which is irrepealable and irrevocable concerning the motion of the ſtars. There is an ordinance of heaven for it: ſo that as the celeſtiall bodyes cannot but continue the courſe, I have aſſigned them for the enlightning of theſe inferiour parts, while the world laſts: So the Covenant which I have made with you ſhall not fail to give you light. Thus he infers in the next verſe, *If theſe ordinances depart from before me, ſaith the Lord, then ſhall the ſeed of Iſrael alſo ceaſe from being a Nation before me for ever*; but that cannot be, I have eſtabliſhed theſe ſtars by a firm and perpetuall decree; therefore you are much more eſtabliſhed.

And ſuch is the exactneſs of their order and motion, that the ſtars of heaven are frequently in Scripture called an hoſt or an army: Now an army, as it conſiſts of many perſons (which is one reaſon why the ſtars are call an hoſt) ſo an army rightly marſhalled is caſt into an exact form, and ſo regular for motion, that it is one of the goodlieſt ſights in the world. Now the ſtars are the hoſt of heaven, they ſtand (as it were) in battalia, they

keep

keep rank and file; there is not so much as one of that great multitude out of place; therefore, *Judg.* 5. 20. where they are said to fight against *Sisera*, they are described fighting in courses, *The stars in their courses fought against Sisera*; as if the stars had been drawn up, now one regiment, then another regiment of them, to charge upon *Sisera* and his host: the heavens fought, and the stars fought, that is, the Lord by an heavenly power and influence of the stars confounded *Sisera*, and all the enemies of *Israel*.

Fifthly, *There is a most efficacious vertue in the stars.* It is a secret vertue, and it is a strong irresistable vertue, no power in the creature can stop it: Therefore God challenges *Job*, in the 38. of this book of *Job*, v. 31. *Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?* There are influences in the stars, and canst thou bind them? Is it in the power of any creature to stop the issues and out-flowings of the stars? Their influences are so efficacious, that none can bind them, but he that looseth them; none can bind them, but the hand and power which made them; there is so much efficacy in them, that if God let them go on in their natural vigour, their effects are wonderful. *I* (saith the Lord, *Hos.* 2. 21, 22.) *will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oyl, and they shall hear Jezreel*; As if he had said, The heavens are next in power to me, they are second to my self in working, *Therefore I will hear the heavens*, the heavens cannot do it, unless I give them a commission, but *I will hear the heavens.* I will leave a power in the heavens, *And the heavens shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn*, &c. There is a gradation, a descent from God to us, and the heavens are the next receptacle, the immediate vessel, receiving and taking in power and vertue from God to defuse and send down upon the creatures here below, *I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth.* αὐτὸν δέχεται.

Sixtly, observe, *that the stars and constellations of heaven, can do nothing of themselves, but as they receive order & comission from the Lord* *He maketh Arcturus and Orion*, &c. They have great power, but it is the Lord that maketh them. That word [*He maketh*] doth not so much signifie the Creation, as the providential disposition of the stars, as was noted in the Exposition of it. *He maketh them*, that is, he orders and disposeth them, or he acts the stars, he trims up those lamps of heaven; the word is so used (2 *Sam.* 19. 24.) *Mephibosheth*, while *David* was in trouble, *had not dressed his feet*; עשׂה *Non tantum facere, sed etiam aptare, disponere, dirigere, et præparare significat.*

the Hebrew is, *He had not made his feet*, that is, he had neglected his body; now (saith *Job.*) the Lord is he that makes, dresses, or trims up those lamps of heaven: though they have a natural vertue, yet that vertue is quickned by providence. *Providence is a continued Creation.* *He maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades.*

The stars are the Servants of God, they receive orders and directions from him for all they do. And the reason why the Lord did so often call his people off from *gazing upon the stars*, and reproved *star-gazers*, was, because they looked no further than the stars, they thought the stars did all, they did not eye God that made *Arcturus*, *Orion*, *&c.* but they onely eyed *Arcturus*, *&c.* Therefore he threatens the *star-gazers and monethly prognosticatours*, who took upon them to resolve future events by the conjunction of planets, and planetary aspects; placing an uncontrollable power in the hands of the heavens, and stars, whereas I (saith the Lord) *make Arcturus*: I made him, and I make him to do what I command, not what you fore-tell. Therefore (*Isa.* 44. 24, 25.) the Prophet speaking of Gods work in making the heavens and the stars, presently adds, how he befools men, that will propheſie from the stars, as if they could tell infallibly what shall come to pass. *I am the Lord that maketh all things, and stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by my self*: What follows? *That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh Diviners mad.* I stretch out the heavens: some will needs propheſie out of the heavens, I have set the stars in the heavens, and they are for signs (*Gen.* 1. 14.) but I have not set them for Prophets: if any presume to declare or resolve what shall be done, I resolve to punish their presumption. I take delight to frustrate men, who delight in this, and to befool them, who would be thus wise. This is my name, *The God that stretcheth out the Heavens alone, and that maketh diviners mad.* Great disappointments enrage: and some men lose their reason, when they lose the credit of doing things above reason. Because they cannot be as God to fore-tell good or evil, they will not be so much as men, *He makes the Diviner mad.* The Law was peremptory and severe against them. (*Deut.* 18. 9.) *There shall not be found amongst you any one that useth divination, or is an observer of times*; why not an observer of times? may we not observe times and seasons? May we not look up to the heavens, and consider their motions? Yes, we may observe times holily, but

not

not superstitiously, as if some times were good, others bad, some lucky, others unlucky, as if the power of God were shut up in, or over-ruled by his own instruments and inferiour causes, this is dishonourable unto God; and thus the Jews were forbidden to *use any divination, or to observe times.*

The Heavens and stars are for signs, but they are not infallible signs. They are ordinary signs of the change of weather, *Mat.* 16. 2,3. They are ordinary signs of the seasons of the year, Spring and Summer, and harvest and winter; they are ordinary signs of a fit time to till and manure the ground, to plow, sow and reap. The earth is fitted and prepared for culture by the motion of the heavens. The heavens are at once the *Alphabet* of the power and wisdom of God, and of our works: we may read there when to do many businesses, *Gen.* 8. 22. *While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.* Those seasons shall continually return according to the time of the year, measured by the Sun, Moon and Stars. Thus, they are signs of ordinary events. And God sometimes puts the sign of an extraordinary event in them, *Mat.* 24. 29. *Immediately after the tribulation of those dayes shall the Sun be darkned, and the Moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken*; which, some understand allegorically; others literally of strange apparitions and impressions in heaven, either before the destruction of *Jerusalem*, or the day of judgement. So *Acts* 2. 19, 20, *&c.* Thus God puts a sign in them of extraordinary events.

But shall man from them prognosticate and fore-tell extraordinary events? as when there shall be famine and pestilence, war and trouble in Nations? This the Lord abhorreth. The counsels of God about these things are written in his own heart; what is man that he should transcribe them from the heavens? But if men will say, they are written there; God will blot out what they say, and prove theirs to be but humane divinations, yea, that they were received from hell, not written in heaven. (Isa. 47. 13.) *I will destroy the signs of them that divine, let now the Astrologers, the star-gazers, the monethly Prognosticatours stand up and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee: Behold, they shall be as stubble, they shall not be able to deliver themselves. It is good to be a star-beholder, but a wicked thing to be a star-gazer*; that is, to look upon the stars, so, as if we could spell out the secret providences of God, and

read future events in the book of those creatures. It is our duty to look upon the heavens, as they declare the glory of God; but it is a sin to look upon the heavens, as if they could declare the destinies, fates and fortunes of men. All which vanities are largely and learnedly confuted by M. *Perkins*, in his book called, *The resolution of the Countrey-man about Prognostications.*

Now, that the success of every Creature is in God, not in the stars, we may see; first, in the order of the creation; God created the earth, and commanded it to bring forth fruit upon the third day, but the lights in the firmament were made the fourth day: The earth can bring forth without the midwifery or help of the heavens. God himself made the earth fruitful without, yea, before the stars were made. Upon which one of the Ancients gives this observation, *Surely (*saith he*) the Lord in his providence made the earth fruitful in all its glory, before he put the stars in the heavens, to the intent to make men see that the fruitfulness of the earth doth not depend upon the heavens or stars*; God needs neither the rain of the clouds, nor the warmth of the Sun to produce these effects. He that made all second causes to work in their ranks, can work without the intervension of any second cause. And because the Lord fore-saw men would dote much upon second causes, and venture to prognosticate by the heavens the fates of men, and the fruitfulness of the earth, therefore he made the earth fruitfull before *he made Arcturus*, or placed those constellations in the heavens.

Philo Judæus de opificio mundi.

Secondly, The providence of God works under the decree of God. *His providence is the execution of his decree.* Therefore we must not bring the decrees down to providence, but we must raise providence up to the decrees.

Thirdly, The heavens and those heavenly bodies, *Arcturus, &c.* are but general causes, there are special causes besides of the earths barrenness or fruitfulness, of tempests at Sea and troubles at land; and the Lord is able to invert all causes, to work beyond causes, without causes and against causes: So that nothing can be infallibly fore-told from the positions, conjunctions or revolutions of those heavenly bodies.

Lastly, Observe, *That it is our duty to study the heavens, and be acquainted with the stars.*

In them the wonderful works of God are seen, and a sober knowledge in nature may be an advantage unto grace. Holy *David*

vid was such a student (*Ps.* 8. 3.) *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained.* Consideration is not a transient or accidental, but a resolved and a deliberate act. Shall we think that God hath made those mighty bodies, the stars to be past by without consideration? Shall men only pore upon a lump of earth, and not have their hearts lifted up to consider those lamps of light? Shall man make no more use of the stars then the beasts of the earth do, namely to see by them? *When I consider thy heavens*, saith *David*. Heaven is the most considerable of all inanimate creatures, and more considerable then most of the animate: and *Davids, when, when I consider the heavens*, notes not only a certainty, that he did it, but frequency in doing it. Some of the *Rabbins* tell us, that when *Isaac* went out into the field *to meditate* (*Gen.* 24. 63.) The subject of his meditation was the stars, or the heavens. It is good to take field-room sometimes to view and contemplate the works of God round about. Onely take heed of the former folly, of *Astrological curiosities*, confining the providence of God to secondary causes; avoid that, and the heart may have admirable elevations unto God, from the meditation of the works of God. (*Psal.* 19. 1.) *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work*; if the heavens declare the glory of God, we should observe what that glory is which they declare. *The heavens preach to us every day. Their line is gone out thorow all the earth, and their words to the end of the world*, *Ps.* 19. 4. Sun, Moon and Stars are Preachers, they are universall preachers, they are *natural Apostles*; the world is their charge, their words, saith the Psalm, *go to the ends of the earth*. We may have good doctrine from them, especially this doctrin in the text, of the wisdom and power of God. And it is very observable that the Apostle aludes to this text in the Psalm, for a proof of Gospel-preaching to the whole world, *Rom.* 10. 18. *So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. But I say, have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.* The Gospel like the Sun casts his beams over, and sheds his light into all the world. *David* in the Psalm saith, *Their line is gone out*, &c. By which word he shews, that the heavens being so curious a fabrick, made (as it were) by line and level, do clearly, though silently preach the skill and perfections of God. Or, that we may read divine truths in them, as in a line formed by a pen into words and sentences (the

קו *Significat lineam, non modo extensam, hoc est, funiculum, sed etiam scriptam, hoc est scripturam.* Par. *in* Rom. 10

(the original signifies both a measuring line, and a written line.) Letters and words in writing being nothing but lines drawn into several forms or figures. But the Septuagint, whose translation the Apostle citeth, for *(Kavam) their line*, read *(Kolam) their sound*; either mis-reading the word, or studiously mollifying the sense into a nearer compliance with the latter clause of the verse. *And their words into the ends of the world.*

Pro. קים קולם

Thus I have endeavoured to make those things plain, which are here represented (to vulgar ears) under strange, unusual, and hidden expressions.

Job is full of Philosophy and Astronomy, he was a great student in the heavens, doubtless, and a holy student. *Job* having given these several instances, gathers them all into a general conclusion in the tenth verse.

Verse 10. *Which doth great things past finding out, yea, and wonders without number.*

These words are repeated from the discourse of *Eliphaz*, in the 5th Chap. *v.9. I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause, which doth great things and unsearchable, marvellous things without number.* I will not stay in a particular discussion of them, but refer the Reader to the place before cited, where the text is opened at large, and particular observations given from it. Take only this observation in general.

That, a godly man labours to exalt God, both in his thoughts and in his words, with heart and tongue, when God depresses and humbles him most.

Mark in what a condition *Job* was, when he speaks thus honourably of the name and power of God. One would think, *Job* had little reason to extoll the power of God, which he felt to his own smart; *Job* was stript of all he had, his outward comforts were taken from him, and the arrows of the Almighty wounded his very spirit. Now when he had wounded *Job* thorow and thorow, thorow flesh and thorow spirit, even at this time, when God appeared, making no use of his power but to undo *Job*, *Job* is in his *Encomium*, all in the praise and commendation of God. He endites a *Chapter* on purpose to set forth the power and wisdom of God, while he imployed both to make his afflictions both great and accurate. This shews the admirable frame of his spirit; in all his distempers his heart stood right, and he would speak good of God, what evil soever

soever befel him from Gods hand. Let God afflict with his power, yet a gracious heart rejoyces in it. A gracious heart will lift up that power which weakens and throws it down. Let the Lord imploy his wisdom to undo, to impoverish such a man, to bring him into such straits that he cannot get out, yet he hath enlarged thoughts of that wisdom, *He sees God is as wise in troubling us, as he is in delivering.* That language of *Spira*, is the right language of Hell (I judge not his person, but his speech) who in a great temptation, spake thus, *I would I had more power then God*, or, *O that I were above God.* He was angry that God had so much power, because God used his power against him. A carnal man would be above God: especially, if *God* at any time puts forth his power against him. *When he is hard bestead and hungry, he frets himself and curses his King and his God, looking upward* (Isa. 8. 21.) to murmur at God, not to pray unto him, or speak good of him. It is observed by one of the Ancients concerning the Heathen, *That if God did not please them, he should be no longer God.* Such are our hearts by nature, if God do not use his power, wisdom, mercy for us, we presently wish he had no power, wisdom, nor mercy for any in the world; we would be above God, unless God will serve us: but an holy heart saith thus, Let God improve his power and wisdom which way he pleaseth, if to afflict and chasten me, yea to destroy and cast me to hell, his be the power for ever, I extoll his power. Nature can only praise God, and speak good of him, when he is doing of us good: But grace prompts the heart to indite a good matter, and bids the tongue be as the pen of a ready writer to advance God, when sense feels nothing but smart, and sees nothing but sorrow round about. *Then grace is in her heights, when she can lift up God highest, while he is casting us down, and laying us lowest*: When we can honour God frowning, as well as smiling upon us; smiting and wounding, as well as kissing and embracing us, then we have learned to honour God indeed.

Tertullian. *Illud est impiorum ingenium, ut Deum non ulterius celebrent, quam cum benefacit.* Fer.

JOB

JOB Chap. 9. Verſ. 11, 12, 13.

Loe, he goeth by me, and I ſee him not; he paſſeth on alſo, but I perceive him not.
Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who ſhall ſay unto him, What doeſt thou?
If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do ſtoop under him.

JOB having in the former context exalted the power and wiſdom of God in many inſtances, and cloſed all with an admiring ſentence, *He doth great things and unſearchable, marvellous things without number.* He, in theſe words ſeems to give a proof of thoſe attributes of Gods works, that they are innumerable and unſearchable, &c.

Verſe 11. *For loe, he goeth by me and I ſee him not; he paſſeth on alſo, but I perceive him not.*

As if he had ſaid, I am not able to reckon how often he worketh, for I cannot alwaies perceive when he worketh, I am not able to ſearch out all his great and wonderfull actings, for I cannot ſee him in many of his actings.

He goeth by me, and I ſee him not.

The Lord is ſaid to *go by us*, not in regard of any local motion: for, he that filleth all places, moves to none, *Do not I fill heaven and earth?* Is the Lords query of himſelf to thoſe who thought to play leaſt in ſight with him. And he convinces them that they could not be hid from him in ſecret places, becauſe he fills all places. There is no place to be found beyond the line of heaven and earth, both which God fills (*Jer.* 23, 24.) Then his motion is not local, but providential, *God doth not move to act, but his acting is his moving.* He goeth by us, doing marvellous things for us, and we ſee not when he is doing, or what he is doing.

חלף *Mutavit, variavit, rem vel locum, denotat mutationem conditionis vel loci.* Mol. *in* Pſ. 90. 6.

The other word here uſed [*He paſſeth on*] is of the ſame ſenſe: yet more peculiar and proper to the motion of ſpirits, we had it in the fourth Chapter, verſ. 15. *A ſpirit paſſed before me*, ſaith *Eliphaz*, when he ſpeaks of the viſion that appeared. It ſignifies to change

change and vary, either place or condition. The transitory changableness of the creature, is expressed by it (*Psal.* 102. 27.) *Thou doest change them, and they shall be changed*; the creatures pass on, as from place to place, so from condition to condition, *The fashion of them passeth away* (1 Cor. 7.31.) They have not only a perfective change, but a corruptive change; but of the Lord he saith, *Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.* The word is used for changing by oppressive destruction (Prov. 31.8.) *Open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction*, or *death*. Such as are appointed to that great change, are called, *a* The Sons of change or destruction: Thus the Originall. So that the word signifieth any change or motion, whether perfective or corruptive. The Lord (saith *Job*) *passeth on*, he maketh changes, he worketh sometimes to perfect, sometimes to destroy, *but I perceive him not*, I am not able to make out what he doth.

Here are two words, one referring to sense, the other to understanding, *He goeth by me, and I see him not*; that is, my senses cannot finde him: *He passeth on also, and I perceive him not*; that is, he rooteth up, he destroyeth, he buildeth, and planteth, but I am not able to apprehend him, or unriddle the meaning of his wonderfull works, *He doth great things, and things unsearchable.*

b There is much variety of opinion about the meaning of these words, though I think the meaning is clear in that generall I have now given. Yet I will touch a little.

First, some interpret *Jobs* discourse conversing still in and about the *c* naturall works of God, the earth, the heaven, the waters and the air, (of which he had spoken before) as also about the body of man (Act. 17. 28.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being.* God is about us, he is ever with us, and yet we observe not, either when he begins to work, or resteth from working. How he is in all things, without all things, and above all things, is not known.

Secondly, Others take his *going* and *passing* for the acts of his *d* favour or dis-favour, *He goeth by me* in bestowing favours, and *He passeth on*, in taking them away: his accesses or recesses in mercy or judgement, his love and his wrath are often discernable, *He goeth by and passeth on*, he varieth his workings, and I perceive him not. *To pass by* is taken sometimes for sparing, pardoning, or shewing mercy. The Lord by his Prophet (*Amos* 7.8.) reports severall judgments, from a full execution of which he was taken

a בני חלוף *Filij excidij*, i.e. *qui trahuntur excidio* Jun. in loc.

b *Non est una interpretatio hujus divinae cessus & accessus.* Pined.

c *Multa sunt naturalia quorum supremum auctorem Deum, vel opus inchoantem, vel ab opere cessantem non observamus, atque ita praecedenti sententiae haec innectitur, tanquam illius subjecta ratio.* Id. *Quemadmodum sit in omnibus extra omnia & supra omnia sciri non potest.* Olymp.

d *Deum venire misericordiae est, discedere patientiae.* Phil. Presb. Aquinas ad beneficia praestita denegata refert. *Transit eum, quem impunitum relinquit.* Drus.

off, yet at last he resolves, *I will not pass by them any more* (it is the word here) that is, I will not have mercy on them any more, I will not spare them any more, the next time I come with my drawn sword in my hand, I will be sure to smite and wound before I put it up, *I will not pass by them any more.* So [*He passeth by me*] may note here the sparing mercy of God. The Lord spareth man many times, and pardons him, not suffering his whole displeasure to arise, when man takes no notice, but is insensible of it. The word is used in this sense) *Prov.* 19. 11.) *It is the glory of man to pass by an offence*; that is, to spare a man that hath offended, not to punish him or take revenge: and it is ordinary in our phraise of speech to say, *I will pass you by* for this time, that is, I will not take any severe notice, or strict account of what you have done. And we finde in the same prophesie of *Amos*, that *to pass thorow*, notes judgement and wrath in the opposite sense; In the fifth Chapter, verse. 17. *In all vineyards shall be wailing; Why? For I will pass thorow thee*, or I will pass into thy bowels or inwards: so the letter of the originall; that is, I will come to judge thee, I will pass thorow thee as a revenger, and wound thee deeply, insomuch that in all *vineyards there shall be wailing*; why in all vineyards? When he saith, There shall be wailing in all vineyards, it implies there should be wailing every where: for if there were joy in any place, it would be in the vineyards; vineyards, are places of mirth and refreshing; grapes make the wine, which makes glad the heart of man. Therefore when he threatens, *That in all vineyards there shall be wailing*; It is as much as if he had said, There shall be sorrow in those places where usually the greatest joy was found, or there shal be sorrow in every place. Joy shall dislodge and give place to sorrow, *for, I will pass thorow thee, saith the Lord.* So that as the work of providence in sparing, and the work of providence in punishing, may be understood by this word, with a little varying of the construction. He passeth by me in the wayes of mercy, I see him not, and he passeth thorow me in the wayes of judgment, and I see him not. I cannot see or understand him as I ought, either in wayes of judgment or of mercy.

בקרבך
In interiori tuo

Deus simplicissimus est spiritus & invisibilis itaque neque nos advenientem cum venit, neque eum abit pedem referentem sentire possumus.

Thirdly, we may take the words as they are an argument to prove the power and wisdom of God to be such, as man is no way able to match or to deal with all, which is the subject *Job* is upon. He would set the Lord infinitely above all that is in the creature, and he doth it here by an argument drawn from his nature. What is

his

his nature? Why, he is most simple, he is a spirit without any mixture, without any composition, without any materiallity, he is invisible, bodily eyes cannot behold him, therefore certainly bodies are not able to overcome him. Man being a materiall substance, is not able to see the Lord, then surely he is not able to contend with, much lesse to conquer the Lord; What then doth he medling with him? It is said in the 4*th* verse of this Chapter, *Who ever hardened himself against him, and hath prospered*? Is flesh and bloud any match for a spirit? If man should strive with god, where should he have him? *He goeth by me and I see him not; he passeth on also and I perceive him not*; I know not where to meet him, he can come upon me on every side, he may take me at all advantages, and destroy me, for I know not how to guard or defend my self. If a man were to fight with an enemy, whom he could not see, and yet his enemy saw him, what an advantage had his enemy against him? Doth any man harden himself against God? *He goeth by, and we see him not*, how then can we deal with him, or stand against him; Thus (I say) it may be an argument to make good that great assertion, *That there is no contending with God*, flesh and bloud are too weak for a spirit. It is the argument which the Apostle uses, to shew that the devil is too hard for man, *We wrestle not with flesh and bloud, but with principalities and powers, with spirituall wickednesses*, &c. *Ephes.* 6. They pass by us, and we understand it not, they are now here amongst us, and we take no notice of it: We are no matches for evil spirits, much less are we able to match the most holy Spirit. *Spirituall wickednesses are strong, but spirituall holinesses are stronger.* This third interpretation renders the words a description of an invincible enemy.

Est invicti hostis descriptio.

Fourthly, It may be understood in the generall, to note the infinite distance which is between God and man, or the dignity of God above man, The Lord is omnipresent, he is going by, and he is passing on, he is in all places, and he acts his power and wisdom where he pleaseth. Poor man is confind to a place, to a spot of earth; when he is *here*, he cannot be *there*; but God is every where: And though God be every where, yet he cannot be seen any where he is. God sees all, himself being unseen, and fills all places, his presence being unperceived; nothing is hid from him, yet he is hid to every thing, but the faith of his own people. Thus *He goeth, and we see him not, he passeth on, and we perceive him not.*

Significatur hic summa distantia inter Deum & homines; Deus omnia videt, & rebus omnibus praesentiaet efficacia sua intervenit, homo suo affixus loco Deum non videns nisi in effectus. Coc.

And so the whole is a confirmation and proof of the generall assertion, that the Lord is infinite in power and wisdom, and that man is an ignorant narrow-room'd and narrow-hearted weak creature compared unto him. We may form up the Argument thus:

He is weak and ignorant in comparison of God, who cannot see or comprehend where God is, or what God doth.

But man is not able to comprehend, or see where God is, or what God doth,

Therefore man is weak and ignorant in comparison of God.

Si quod documentum potentiæ et sapientiæ suæ edat Deus ob oculos meos, non sum ille qui id pervestigare possum, adeo inscrutabilia sunt judicia ejus. Jun.

The ground is this, He that cannot comprehend or see what another doth is not able to hinder or match him in what he doth: But such is the state and condition of man, he is so far from being able to equall God in dignity, or hinder what he doth, that he cannot find out or know what God doth.

Transeundi et transmeandi verbis concinnè significat ea documenta sapientiæ quæ Deus exhibet, quasi præsens præsentes erudiret.

Yet this is not to be taken strictly, as if man did not at all perceive or understand what God doth. *Job* in the former context gave us a large account of the works of God, what wonders he had done. The Saints find out some of Gods doings in the world, though the blind world see not any thing he doth. But he speaks comparatively; *The Lord passeth on, and we perceive it not*; that is, it is little of God that we perceive; it is little of the workings of God that we see at the best. There are many persons who doe not see him at all, and many works that are not seen at all by any person. And they, the eyes of whose understandings are anointed to see most clearly, are not able to see all that God doth. None can see all, some will not see what they may (Isa. 26. 10.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see it*; and in the former verse, *In the land of uprightnes, will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the Majesty of the Lord.* That which good men see is but little, and evil men see nothing. So that, as the Lord goeth altogether invisibly in his essence, so mostly in his actions; man sees but few things of the many, and little of the great things which God doth.

Ita significat, ex operibus Dei vix centissimum quodq; ut par est ab hominibus expendi. Pined.

I meet with a gross exposition of this text given by some Papists. *No man* (saith one of them) *can know whether God dwell or abide in him or no.* And *Bellarmine* in his 5*th* book, and 5*th* Chapter concerning justification citeth it to prove, *That a believer cannot know that he is justified, but must believe blindfold, or take the work*

Nemo potest scire an Deum habeat in se habitantem et in se manentem. Jacob. Jan son. *in loc.*

work of juſtification by grace in the dark, For (ſaith he) *God goeth by us, and we ſee him not; he paſſeth on, and we perceive him not*: That is, as his gloſs ſpeaks) God cometh in favour to juſtifie, or he leaveth under wrath, and yet man remains ignorant both of the one, and of the other ſtate. Surely he was at a great pinch to finde a proof for his point, when he was forced to repair to this Scripture to ſeek one. Providence toward mankinde (not the juſtification of a ſinner) is the proper ſubject of this text. And as there is nothing for a blind-fold juſtification here, ſo many other Scriptures are expreſly againſt it. To ſay that a man cannot know when God loveth him, or ſhineth upon him, is to contradict what our Saviour aſſerts, Joh. 14.17. *I will ſend the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and ſhall be in you. Ye know him*, ſaith Chriſt to his people; the Saints ſee God in a ſpirituall ſenſe, or in his workings upon their ſpirits. And though God works much upon our ſpirits, which we know not, yet we have a promiſe of the Spirit, by whom we know God in his workings. Few know when God is nigh, or when he is afar off what his goings away mean, or what his comings. But when he cometh to the Saints, they know he cometh, and when he hideth or departeth from them, they know his hidings are departures. Hence their joyes and over-flowings of comfort, when he manifeſts his preſence; and hence their bitter complainings and cryings after him, where he ſeems to abſent himſelf and hide his face: yet this Text hath a truth in it, in reference to the inward and ſpirituall, as well as the outward providentiall dealings of God, that ſometimes, *He goeth by us, and we ſee him not; he paſſeth on alſo, and we perceive him not.*

Alieniſſime hunc locum citat Bellarmi-nus, *ut probet nullum fidelem ſcire an juſtificatus ſit.* Coc.

Hence learn, Firſt, That

God is inviſible in his eſſence, and incomprehenſible in many of his actions. Mans eye cannot ſee him: Mans underſtanding cannot comprehend what he doth.

But why ſpeaks *Job* this, as a matter of wonder, if it be the common condition of man-kinde? *Behold, he paſſeth by, and I ſee him not*; who can ſee him, who can perceive or comprehend him? When *Moſes* (Exod. 33.20.) deſired to ſee his face, the Lord anſwers, *No man can ſee my face and live*; God ſpake to *Moſes face to face*, that is, familiarly, as a man ſpeaketh to his friend, yet *Moſes* did not, could not ſee the face of God. No man can ſee God in

in his eſſence or nature: A ſight of God would aſtoniſh, yea, ſwallow up the creature, *It is death to ſee the living God*; and man muſt die before he can ſee God ſo fully as he may, and know as he is known. But (though the face of God be inviſible) yet his *back-parts* may be ſeen. *Behold* (ſaith the Lord to *Moſes*) *there is a place by me, ſtand thou there upon a rock, and thou ſhalt ſee my back-parts*; thou ſhalt ſee much of my glory ſhining forth, as much as thou canſt bear, as much as will ſatisfie thy deſire (were it a thouſand times larger then it is) though not ſo much as thou haſt (not knowing what thou askeſt) deſired of me. My Name ſhall be proclaimed, *Gracious and mercifull* &c. the back-parts of God may be ſeen; the inviſible God diſcovereth much of himſelf to man: and ſhews us a ſhadow of that ſubſtance which cannot be ſeen.

Some may object that of the Prophet *Iſaias*, crying out, *Wo unto me, for mine eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of hoſts*, Chap. 6.5. Seen him? could *Iſaias* ſee him, whom *Job* and *Moſes* could not? *Iſaias* did not ſee him in his eſſence and nature, but in the manifeſtations and breakings forth of his glory. *His train filled the Temple*, ſaith the Text (*verſ.* 1.) or his skirts. It is an alluſion to great Kings who when they walk in State, have their trains, or the skirt of their royall robe held up. 'Twas this train, which *Iſaias* ſaw. He ſaw not God who was preſent, but he ſaw the manifeſt ſigns of his preſence. That ſpeech of *Iſaiah* ſeemed to ſavour of, and border upon higheſt blaſphemy, and was therefore charged as an article of accuſation againſt him; he was indited of blaſphemy for ſpeaking thoſe words, *I have ſeen the Lord*, his enemies taking or reſting it, as if he had made the Lord corporeall and viſible with the eye of the body. And it is conceived he was put to death upon that, and one other paſſage in his propheey, *Ch.* 1.10. calling the Princes of *Judah*, *Princes of Sodom, and the people thereof, the people of Gomorrah.*

But though God be thus inviſible in his eſſence, yet there is a way by which the eſſence of God may be ſeen. And of that *Moſes*, to whom the Lord ſaid, Thou caſt not ſee my face, the Authour to the Hebrews ſaith (*Heb.* 11.24.) *That he ſaw him who was inviſible*; the letter of the text carries a contradiction in the adjunct, it is as much as if one ſhould ſay, *He ſaw that which could not be ſeen.* The meaning is, He ſaw him by the eye of faith, who could not be ſeen by the eye of ſenſe; faith ſees not only the back-parts, but the face of Jehovah: the eſſence of God is clear to that eye,

as

as any of his attributes, yea his essence is as plain to faith, as any of his works are to sense. Thus he is seen, *Who no man hath seen nor can see* (1 Tim. 6.16.) not the Saints in heaven: they are not able to see the Lord in his essence, *He passeth by them there, and they see him not*; in heaven we are promised a sight of him, yet not that sight, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they shall see God:* and *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, then holy men shall see him; the state of Saints in his glory is vision, as here it is faith (2 *Cor.* 13.12.) *we shall see him face to face, and as he is* (1 Joh. 3.2.) These scriptures which speak of the estate of the Saints, beholding God in glory, are not to be understood, as if the nature and essence of God could be seen, for no man hath seen that, nor ever shall; but they are meant of a more full and glorious manifestation of God; *We shall see them face to face*; that is, more plainly, for it is opposed *to seeing him in a glass*; we see him now in a glass, that is, darkly, in ordinances, in duties, in his word, and in his works, but there shall be no need of these glasses in heaven. We shall have so direct and full manifestation of God, that these glasses which reflect him shall be out of use. The Saints on earth have sometimes a sight of God without a glass, that is, out of all ordinances, and promises, and works either wrought in them or for them. God comes near to their spirits, and lifts them above means, and shews them his love, and their interest in him by an immediate witness of the Spirit, (1 *John* 5.8.) For although the water and the bloud (justification and sanctification) never witness without the Spirit, and though the Spirit never witnesses against them, or where they are not; yet the Spirit doth often witness above them, and without them, that is, they not being called forth to give their witness. This is next door to heaven: only, the vision in heaven will be exceedingly heightned and raised, not only above our vision by ordinances, but above our vision by immediate revelation or witness.

Further consider, The sight we have of God is in Christ. God is seen in every creature (*Rom.* 1.) much more in ordinances, but Christ is *the express image of his person, and the brightness of his glory*, *Heb.* 1.3. He is the *medium* by which we see God now, and some have thought we shall see him only in Christ for ever. But it is out of doubt that in this life God is seen only in Christ savingly. We of our selves, are so far off from God, that we cannot see him. There must be a due distance between the organ and the object; we are afar off from God; untill Christ bring us near; we come,

to

to, and ſee the *Father through the Son.* And how neer ſoever we are to any object, we cannot ſee it without an eye. We are naturally blind, the eyes of our mind muſt be enlightned before we ſee him, Chriſt cleareth our underſtandings and cures our blindneſs, *He is made to us of God wiſdom* (to ſee our need of him to be made) *righteouſneſs to us, and ſanctification and redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. Again, The *medium* muſt be light; if the eye be clear, yet while the air is dark we cannot ſee. There muſt be an outward light, as well as an inward light to ſee by; that Jeſus Chriſt makes alſo; for *He is the light of the world, as well as the enlightner of every one that cometh into the world.* He ſends the means of knowledge, as well as gives an ability to know. He ſends light to the eyes of our mind, and he is light in the eyes of our mind. What we ought to know comes from him, and how to know as we ought comes from him. Without him, God goeth by us in the Goſpel, and we ſee him not, he may paſs on for ever, and we never perceive him.

Secondly, Obſerve, *That as the Lord in his nature cannot be ſeen at all: So (ſuch is the weakneſs of man, that) we cannot ſee him fully in his word, or works.*

How little is it that we ſee, that we know of God in either? What admirable operations are there in the courſe of naturall things, in the Sun, Moon, and ſtars, in the growth of herbs and plants, and in our own bodies, which we ſee not? What admirable adminiſtrations are there in the courſe of civil things? The beginnings, growths and declinings of Common-wealths, the tranſplantations of people from Countrey to Countrey, their oppreſſions by injuſtice, their confuſions by War, their eſtabliſhments by peace, their conſumptions by plague and famine, their encreaſe by health and abundance are little minded by the moſt of men. How doth God turn Nations up-ſide-down, and hurl Kingdoms together, and we perceive him not. Some take no notice at all of God, as doing ſuch things, none taking ſuch notice as they ought. We obſerve creatures, what this man did, and what the other, ſuch men were malicious and unfaithfull, ſuch were valiant and wiſe, ſuch were ſelf-ſeekers, ſuch ſelf-deniers, ſuch conſtant Patriots, and ſuch were apoſtates. Thus we ſee men, but we ſeldom ſee God in the great tranſactions and motions of Kingdoms. And we ſee him leaſt of all in the courſe of ſpirituall things, in his working upon our hearts; God works wonders in us, and we perceive

ceive him not! We regard not his comings or goings, his comfortings or withdrawings, when our ſpirits are heated, or when they are cold, when we are ſtrong, or when we are weak: There are continual varieties and changes in our ſpirits, had we a clearneſs to make obſervation. The work of God in the heart of a beleiver moving it, ordering it, preſerving it, comforting it, purging it, is as wonderful, and more, then any of his works in the whole world.

Thirdly, Note, *Man is not fit to ſit as a Judge upon the works and dealings of God.*

Shall we judge God in what he doth, when we cannot apprehend what he doth? a Judge muſt have the full cognizance of the matter before him, how elſe can he paſs ſentence about it? Shall man be ſo bold as to get up into the throne, and paſs ſentence upon what God doth, when he cannot apprehend or take in evidence of what he doth? *He goeth by thee, and thou ſeeſt him not; he paſſeth on alſo, and thou perceiveſt him not*; And wilt thou cenſure what thou canſt not perceive?

Fourthly, Which is *Jobs* ſcope,

It ſhould be matter of great humilation to us that we ſee ſo little of God.

God works round about us and in us, and yet we know little of him. Our blindneſs ſhould abaſe us in our own eyes: God is all eye, and all hand, and we ſo blind that we cannot ſee what his hand doth; it muſt lay a man low in his own ſight, to conſider how little he ſees of God.

Verſ. 12. *Behold he taketh away, who can hinder him? who ſhall ſay unto him, What doſt thou?*

This and the next verſe contain a proof of man's weakneſs, as the former doth of mans ignorance and blindneſs, *He paſſeth by, and I ſee him not.* There is mans blindneſs, *He taketh away, and who can hinder him?* There is mans weakneſs. Suppoſe a man ſhould ſee God in his works, and apprehend what he is about, yet though he hath ſo much light, as to ſee God, he hath not ſo much ſtrength, as to hinder God; is not this an argument of mans weakneſs? What! contend with God? God doth many things, and thou canſt not ſee *him*, or if thou ſeeſt *him*, yet it is not in thy power to ſtop him, *Behold he taketh away, and who can hinder him?* Yea, man is ſo far from being able to ſtop or hinder God, in

what he is about to do, that man hath not right to question God, or to ask him what he is about to do. Man is neither strong enough to stop him from what he will do, nor righteous enough to question him for what he doth. This is the total denying of any possibility in man to deal with God. How can he stop God in what he doth, who cannot so much as ask him, what he doth? *Who shall say unto him what dost thou?*

Behold, he taketh away.

חתף
Rapuit more latronum. Significat velocitatem rapinæ. Rab Mord. *Raptim auferre* Tigur.

The word signifies to take away by violence and force, to take away as a robber takes, to steal away: As if he had said, suppose the Lord come by open violence to take a thing from thee, or secretly, and as it were by stealth, to bereave thee of thy estate, or of thy life, if he take all from thee and strip the naked, *What canst thou do?* So the word is used (*Prov.* 23.28.) Speaking of a wicked woman, an harlot, *She lieth in wait as for a prey*; the Hebrew is, *She lieth in wait as a robber*, to take away the estate, yea, and the life of those whom she shall entangle. Some understand this more specially of taking away life. If he will stop thy breath, and deliver thee up to death, so *Augustine* upon the place; or as the *Chaldee*, *If he take one out of the world, who can hinder him?* As if *Job* said, the Lord may not only take away so much as he hath taken from me, but more, without wrong to me. He hath taken away my goods, and my estate, my children and friends, he hath fetched away my health and strength, my beauty and outward comforts; if he come and take away my life also at the next bout, I cannot hinder him; I can neither compel him to restore, nor call him to an account; I can neither urge him to restitution, nor charge him with oppression. He plainly intimates the rapine of his goods by the *Chaldeans*, &c. Of which he spake positively (Ch. 1.21.) *The Lord hath taken*, and here by way of general supposition, *If he take away*,

Si rapuerit hominem è mutado. Targ. *Si morti tradiderit.* August. *Quoties ipsi visum fuerit (ut mihi nunc evenit) quempiam vel bonis ipsis spoliare, quis illum ut raptorem ad restitutionem coget? imo quis illum jure in disquisitionem vocavit? voluntas enim ipsius est justitiæ norma.* Bez

Who shall hinder him.

Mr. *Broughton* translates, *Who shall make him restore?* So he carries it in allusion unto men, who violently take away the goods and estates of another. If a man come with force and take away my goods, I may make him restore them again by a greater force; but if the Lord take away and ask me no leave, I cannot make him restore. The word signifies to stop or turn a thing, and because in recover-

יְשִׁיבֶנּוּ
à radice שׁוּב *Vertere aut reducere, quis restituere eum fa-*

ing

ing of a prey, or in making a man restore, we stop and stay his course, therefore the word is indifferently applied to both.

Others understand it in this sense, *If he taketh away, who shall hinder him?* that is, who can turn him from his purpose? who can stop him in the thing he hath a mind to do? The vulgar translation varies much, *If he suddenly ask a man a question, who shall be able to answer him?* The Hebrew word which signifies to return, signifies to answer, answering is the return of a word (*Prov* 8.13.) *He that answereth (or returneth a word) before he heareth a matter.* But I shall lay that by, though the abettours of the Vulgar make great store of it; interpreting their meaning thus, if the Lord cite a man to judgement, and bring him to tryal, man is not able to answer him, or plead his own cause. Man cannot stand before the Lord. Observe hence,

ciet, quis recuperabit aut reducet prædam?

Quidam non de præda sed de ipso Deo intelligunt. Quis revocabit enim à proposito? Si repente interroget quis respondebit ei. Vulg. *Vel quod respondens convertit se ad interrogantem vel quod responsum regeratur, restituatur; tanquam debitum interroganti.*

First, that, *All our comforts are in the power of God?*

If he taketh away, supposeth he can take away, and he can take all away, and do us no wrong. It is no robbery if God rob us, his robbery is no wrong: why? because he comes not as a thief, but as a Lord and Master of our estates; he may come and take them away as he pleaseth, and when he pleaseth.

Secondly, Note this from it, *He taketh away.*

That which God doth by the hand of the creature, is to be reckoned as his own act.

He taketh away when creatures take away. It is seldome that God dealeth immediately with us in these outward providences; he sends men, stirs instruments to do what is done. But that which man doth, the Lord doth (Isa. 42. 24.) *Who gave Jacob to the spoylers, and Israel to the robbers? Did not I the Lord?* Men spoil'd and robbed them, yet it was the Lords act to send those spoilers, *Did not I the Lord?* As that which man doth in spirituals is the Lords act, when man converteth and saveth, it is the Lord that saveth and converteth; when man comforteth and refresheth by applying the promises, it is the Lord that comforteth and refresheth; when man gives resolution in doubts, it is the Lord that resolveth doubts; mans act is the Lords. So here, when man robbeth and spoyleth us, the act is from the Lord, though the wickedness of the act is from the man. The Lord suffers men to spoyl & undo us, yea the Lord orders them to spoyl us: it is done not only by his permission, but by his commission; not only with his leave, but by his appointment, *I will send him against an hypocritical*

Nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoyl, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets, Isa. 10.

Observe thirdly, *What the Lord will do, either by himself or by instruments, no man can stop or prevent.*

If he taketh away, who shall hinder him? The Lord hath absolute power, if he will overthrow men, or families, or whole Kingdoms, none can stay him. There have been four great Monarchies in the world, and the Lord coming in judgement against them, hath taken all away. The united strength of all creatures cannot stand before him, when he is angry and resolved. The *Babylonian*, could not say and perform it, I will keep my throne: The *Persian* could not say and do it, I will keep my State: The *Grecian* could not say and maintain it, I will keep my glory: The *Roman* could not say and make it good, I will keep my Empire. When the Lord had a mind to it, he came and fetcht away the power and glory, the crown and dignity of those Monarchs, he threw down their thrones, brake their states, darkned their glory, dissipated their Empires, no man could hinder him. *How are ye fallen from Heaven O Lucifers, sons of the morning, how are ye cut down to the Ground, which did weaken the Nations? though ye said in your hearts, We will ascend into heaven, we will exalt our thrones above the stars of God: We will ascend above the height of the clouds, we will be like the most high; yet how are ye brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit? All that look upon you say, Are these the men that made the earth to tremble, that did shake Kingdoms?* Thus the Lord hath taken away the *thrones of Princes*, and none could hinder; he hath also removed the *Candlesticks of Churches*, and none could hinder. Christ threatned the seven Churches of *Asia*, that he would come and take away their Candlesticks: which of these hindered him? Both Crowns and Candlesticks must down, if he speak the word. It is said, when *David* kept his fathers Sheep, there came a Lyon and a Bear, and took a Lamb and a Sheep out of the flock, but he arose and went out after them, and rescued both Lamb and Sheep, taking the prey out of their teeth: When the Lord Christ, the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah* will come, and tear and take away, no *David* can rescue out of his hand. The five Kings that came against *Sodome*, took away *Lot*, *Abraham* went with his army and made them restore, made them bring back again; it is ordinary with man, when one hath robbed another, for a stronger to make him

him restore and vomit up the sweet morsels, which he hath swallowed. It is not thus with God.

First, Power cannot do it: though the instruments which he useth to take away from us be weak, yet the strong shall not be able to make the weaker restore. A weak Nation may destroy a strong Nation, and the stronger shall not be able to make the weaker restore, if the Lord send them. When the *Babylonians* encamped about *Jerusalem*, he warns them by his Prophet, do not think you shall deliver your selves by your great strength, I have sent them to take your City and your State, *And though they were all wounded men, yet they shall rise up and take your City* (Isa. 43.13.) *I will work* (saith the Lord) *and who shall let it?* Who shall let? Why, they might say, we will have some that shall let it: No (saith the Lord) none shall let it; *Behold, I have sent to Babylon, and destroyed all their Princes*, those that sought to hinder me in my work by their power and counsel, are broken, though they seem'd as strong as iron bars (so the word is,) These bars of iron cannot keep me from entring, I will break all opposition raised against my work.

Secondly, As power cannot hinder him, so policy cannot; no counsel shall stop him: They (*Isa.* 7. 6.) took counsel and resolved strongly, *We will go up against Judah, and destroy it, and set a King in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal*; The Lord answereth in the next words, *It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass:* You resolve to do it, you make it out in your counsels, how to hinder mine, but it shall not be, it shall not come to pass. As no counsell against us shall stand, if the Lord be with us (*Isa.* 8. 10.) So no counsel for us shall stand, if the Lord be against us.

Thirdly, When the Lord is resolved to take away the peace and glory of a Nation, or of a Church, he will do it, and no spirituall means shall hinder him, prayer it self shall not hinder him. If any thing in the world can move the Lord to restore, when he taketh away the peace of a people, it is prayer and the cry of his people. Prayer hath often met the Lord, as *Abigal* did *David* (1 *Sam.* 25.) and prevailed with him to put up his sword, which was ready to destroy. At the voice of prayer the Lord hath restored that which he took away, and hath stayed from doing that which he seemed fully resolved to doe, Psal. 106. 23. *The Lord would have destroyed them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him*

in

in the breach. Did *Moses* out-power the Lord? did he out-wit, or out-policy the Lord? No, but *Moses* prayed, and prayed so strongly that the Lord was hindered, that is, he, as if he had been hindred, did not effect the thing, he restored their comforts again, when he had arrested but some of them, and seemed to come armed with resolution to take all away. Yet sometimes we find the Lord will come and take away, and prayer it self, prayer and fasting, cries and tears shall not hinder, God will trample upon all these. *God was resolved to take away the glory of Israel*; and to assure them that he would, he takes away that wherein their chief assurance lay, that he would not (Jer. 15. 1.) *Thus saith the Lord, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people*, &c. As if he had said, ye think to hinder me now, ye will stop me, ye will send out prayer, your old friend, which hath helped you heretofore at many a dead lift. And if you cannot pray enough your selves, you will procure prayers, and pray in the aid of prayer from all the favourites that I have in the world, ye will get *Moseses* and *Samuels*, such as they, to pray for you; ye may do so, if ye will, but it shall not profit you, they and ye shall lose your labour, even these labours will not quit cost or be worth the while, to the end ye aim at, for *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, and intreated for this people, yet my mind could not be toward them: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth, such as for the sword, to the sword, and such as for death, to death, and such as for captivity, to captivity.* Thus, I say, sometimes the Lord is so resolved take away life, riches, glory, peace, the all both of persons and Nations that nothing shall help us, or hinder him, no, not the prayers and cries, not the supplications and tears of his own people, which are the strongest stops of all in the way of provoked justice. If prayer cannot stay destruction, and obtain a reprieve from death, if the prayers of a *Moses* and a *Samuel* cannot, nothing can; it is as if God had said, the best means shall fail you, therefore all means shall fail you: if when prayer cannot hinder God, we resort to other means, it is as if we should think to fasten an Anchor with a twined thread, which hath broken a cable; or to conquer an enemy with a pot-gun and a bull-rush, whom we could not with sword and Cannon. And as God will not sometimes be entreated, so he ought not at any time to be questioned; which is the next point.

Who

Who ſhall ſay unto him, what doſt thou.

That's further conſiderable; man is not only not able to ſtop the Lord from what he would do, but he hath no right to put in a plea againſt what he hath done, no nor to ask him what he hath been doing, or why he did it. The ſuperiour may ask the inferiour, and call him to an account: Every inferiour Judge and Court, is accountable to thoſe above; that is the higheſt Court, and he the higheſt Judge, to whom no man can ſay, *What doſt thou?* The *Parliament of England* is therefore the higheſt Judicatory in this Kingdome, becauſe their actions are not queſtionable in any other Court; one *Parliament* may ſay to another, What haſt thou done? This *Parliament* hath ſaid to *Parliaments* that have gone before, what have ye done in making ſuch and ſuch Laws? No power of man beſides their own can queſtion ſome men, much leſs can any man queſtion God, and ſay to him, *What doſt thou?* he is ſupream, there is no appeal to any other higher Judge, or higher Court. Hence obſerve,

Supremus judex eſt a quo non poteſt eſſe provocatio.

Whatſoever God reſolveth and determineth concerning us, we muſt bear it, and quietly ſubmit.

No man may ſay unto him, *What doſt thou? Why do ye ſit ſtill* (ſaith the Prophet, *Jer.* 8. 14.) *Aſſemble your ſelves, and let us enter into the defenced Cities and, let us be ſilent there. for the Lord hath put us to ſilence, and given us waters of gall to drink, becauſe we have ſinned againſt him. The Lord hath put us to ſilence*; that is, the Lord hath done theſe things, and we are not to queſtion him about them, or to ask him what he hath done, or why he hath done thus? Therefore let us be ſilent, ſay they. Let us not murmure at, and complain over our own ſufferings, much leſs tax and charge God for his doings. It becomes us to obey Gods ſuſpenſion; to be ſilent, when he puts us to ſilence. The Lord never ſilences any (unleſs in wrath to thoſe who would not hear) from ſpeaking in his Name, and publiſhing his Word. But he hath ſilenced all from ſpeaking againſt works; and it will be ill with us, if our paſſions (how much ſoever God ſeems to act againſt us) ſhall take off this ſuſpenſion. The Lord is uncontrollable in all his works. When *Nebuchadnezzar* (Dan. 4. 35.) came to himſelf, and began to think and ſpeak like a man, after he had been among the beaſts: ſee what an humble acknowledgment he makes concerning God; *All the Inhabitants of the earth* (ſaith he) *are reputed*

Quicquid de nobis Deus ſtatuit lib. nter ferendum eſt.

puted as nothing, and he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? Here we have both parts of *Jobs* speech; none can stay his hand, which is the former; and none can say unto him, *What dost thou?* which is the latter. That great Monarch acknowledged he had no power to question God, though he at that time had power to question all the men upon the earth. *Nebuchadnezzar* speaks like *Job*. A wicked man may make a true report of God. Many speak right of the Lord, whose hearts are not right with him. *Nebuchadnezzar* was converted from beastliness, but I find not that he was converted to holiness. He came home to his own Court, but I see no proof that he came home to the Church of God; yet, see how divinely he speaks, and how humbly he walks, not so much as offering to ask God (who had chang'd him from a Commander of men to a companion of beasts) *What dost thou?*

We may ask the Lord (in one sense) *what he doth?* Yea, the Lord doth nothing in the world, but his Saints and servants are enquiring of him about it. He invites them to petition for what they would have, *Ask of me things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me,* (Is. 45. 11.) Though man cannot order or enjoyn the least thing upon God, yet at the entreaty of his people, he is as ready to do as if he were at their command. And as we are thus envited to ask things to come, so we are not totally denied to ask about things already done. We may ask him in an humble way for information, not in a bold way of contradiction. We may in zeal to his glory, not in discontent with our own condition, expostulate with him about what he hath done. So *Joshua* (Chap. 7. 7, 8.) *Alas O Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan,* &c. but how durst *Joshua* speak thus? what if God would destroy them, was it not his duty to bear it, and let God alone? Yes doubtless, and such I doubt not was the frame of *Joshua's* spirit. If *Israel* only had been to suffer, *Joshua* had held his peace, at least from such language; but he saw a further matter in it; the glory of God was like to suffer in their sufferings: the close of his prayer betrayes this holy disposition of his heart, *vers. 9. And what wilt thou do unto thy great name?* As if he had said, Lord, the matter were not much, though the

name

name of *Israel* were blotted out from under heaven, so thy Name were written in fairer characters. But I fear a blow to *Israel* will be a blot to thy name, and therefore I have taken upon me to pray this prayer unto thee, and I have prayed rather for thee, than to thee. All prayers are made to God, and yet some are made for him. Not that he hath any want, or is in any the remotest possibility of any danger, but onely for the promoting of his glory, and that the world may not have occasion of a dishonourable thought of him, whose honour never abates in it self, or in the eyes of his own people. Thus we may ask him what he hath done, and why he hath brought such desolations upon his people. But we may not ask him what he hath done, either to question his right to do it, or to question his righteousness in doing of it. No creature may put the question upon either of these terms, *What hast thou done?* much less conclude, Thou hast done that which thou hast no right to do, or, thou hast been unrighteous in doing it. Either of these is highest blasphemy: for, whatsoever the Lord doth, he hath right to do, and whatsoever the Lord doth, he is righteous in doing it.

Hence it followeth by way of corollary, That

The Lord is of absolute power.

He is the *Soveraign Lord, Lord over all*; there is no appeal from him, no questioning of him. *Solomon* speaketh of the power of a King, in this language (*Eccles.* 8.4.) *Where the word of a King is, there is power; and who may say unto him, What doest thou?* But is there nothing which a King doth, about which it may be said unto him, What dost thou? And what is this word of a King? The word of a King, is the Law of his Kingdom: all that a King doth or speaks besides the Law, he speaks as a man, not as a King; and that's the meaning of *Solomons* text; which Court-flatterers have corrupted with their unsound glosses, as if every word of a King were of absolute power, and must have peremptory obedience. A King is for his Kingdom; and while he commands according to the rules and lawes of his Kingdom, no Subject may question him, or say unto him, What dost thou? There is no power above his power, as he is armed with the power of his Laws. And because whersoever the Word of God is, there is his Law, therefore whersoever the Word of God is, there is power, and no man may say unto him, What doest thou? Every word of direction, spoken by God is a Law, because his will is the Law of all things

and perſons. As the will of man by nature is not ſubject (by obeying) to the righteous Law of God, neither indeed can be; ſo the will of God by nature is the ſubject, containing all righteous Laws, neither indeed can it not be: for though God be voluntarily, and with higheſt freeneſs righteous, yet he is righteous neceſſarily, and with greateſt undeclinableneſs; As he is freely what he is, ſo it is impoſſible for him, not to be what he is. And therefore no man ought to ſay to God, What doeſt thou? ſeeing God can do nothing, but what he ought. In vain then is God either attempted by power, or ſollicited by prayer againſt his own mind; For,

Verſ. 13. *If God will not with-draw his anger, the proud helpers do ſtoop under him.*

Though, *If God taketh away none can hinder him, though none ought to ſay unto him, What doſt thou?* whatſoever he doth; yet poſſibly ſome will be venturing upon this hard task, and undertake this impoſſible adventure, attempting to recover Gods booty, and his priſoners out of his hand: but ſee the iſſue, *If God will not with-draw his anger, the proud helpers do ſtoop under him.* Suppoſe any ſhould come to help, protect and patronize thoſe whom God hath a mind to take away and deſtroy, ſhall they proſper or ſpeed? No, not only they themſelves whom the Lord hath taken away, but their aſſiſtants, and their ſeconds, all that appear for them (except God call in his anger) ſhall fall before him.

If God will not with-draw his anger.

לא־ישיב אפו
Non revocabit naſum, non redibit à furore.

The letter of the Hebrew is, *If the Lord will not turn away his noſtrils, or his face.* Noſtrils or face are taken here, as in many other Scriptures, for anger, becauſe there is ſuch an appearance of anger in the face and noſtrils, acted paſſion is ſeated there, as was noted (*Chap.* 4. 9.) Therefore to turn away the face or noſtril, is to turn away from anger, *Pſal.* 78. 38. *Many a time turned he away his anger*; it is this word. When the Lord is angry, the turning of his face towards a man ſheweth he is reconciled; and when he is angry, the not turning away of his face, ſhews that he is unreconciled, or reſolved to continue angry. And while God is ſo reſolved man is in a ſad caſe, his helpers muſt ſtoop, *The ſtrength of Iſrael will not lie or repent* (1 Sam. 15. 29.) The Hebrew is, *the victory of Iſrael*, the Lords ſtrength is victory; victorious perſons can hardly

Avertit naſum ſuum, quaſi ſe vinci permittat, et ab his miliante ſe peccatore fugeret.

Ipſamet victoria vim i neſcit.

ly be overcome, but victory cannot; therefore except himself will withdraw, except himself overcome himself, it is not in the power of all creatures to overcome him (*Job* 23. 13.) *He is in one mind, and who can turn him?* As if he had said, except the Lord will turn himself, and alter what he himself hath determined, it is not in men to cause him to alter, *He is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doth*; which is the highest expression of power imaginable. How many things do our souls desire which we cannot do? We are desiring and desiring, yet our hands are not able to bring it to pass, *The desires of the slothfull* (alwayes) *slay them*, because (saith *Solomon*, Prov. 21. 25.) *their hands refuse to labour, and the desires of the diligent slay them*, sometimes, because they cannot compass the thing desired, with all their labour; but as for the Lord, *What his soul desireth, even that he doth.* And as his desires are irresistible, so is his anger, his irascible appetite is as victorious as his concupiscible, *unless God withdraw his anger*,

The proud helpers do stoop under him.

The word is, *Helpers of pride*, that is, such as think themselves most powerfull and able to help, *The helpers of pride*, or the strong helpers. The same word (note that by the way) signifies strength and pride, because we are so apt to be proud of our strength. If a man have a little strength in the world, strength of friends, or of riches, strength of body or of mind, strength of understanding, strength of memory, strong parts, he is under a strong temptation to pride. *Pride is one of the greatest weaknesses of man, but it is alwayes grounded upon supposed strength.*

רהב *Invaluit robore, insolens fuit. Freti superbia.* Pagn. *Auxiliatores superbiæ.* Regia.

But who are these proud, these strong helpers?

Some understand it of the good angels, who are the strongest, the highest of created helpers: Angels stoop under the power of God as well as men.

Others expound these strong helpers to be devils, who are evil Angels, to whom evil men seek sometimes for help. If the Lord will not turn away his anger, though men seek to the devil for help (as *Saul* did) that helper shall stoop under him. *Saul* consulted with a witch (the devils oracle) yet he could not be delivered by a witch.

Others understand by these *strong helpers*, godly men; if the Lord will not turn away his anger, the righteous shall stoop under him,

that is, they ſhall not be able to reſcue a perſon or a Nation from the *anger* of *God* by *prayer*, or by the utmoſt improvements of their intereſt with God. Some places have fallen, becauſe they wanted godly men to ſupport them; and ſome places have fallen, though they had godly men to ſupport them. The Vulgar Latine tranſlation renders, *They that bear up the pillars of the world ſhall fall.* Godly men bear up the pillars of the world. Though the Hebrew will not bear their tranſlation, yet the ſenſe is good. Godly men are the worlds ſupporters. It is ſaid, (*Rev.* 12. 16.) *That the Earth helped the woman*, that is, worldly men for carnal ends helped the Church, when a flood of perſecution, caſt out of the mouth of the dragon, was ready to ſwallow her up. But the Church continually helps the world, and ſwallows up many of thoſe floods of Gods diſpleaſure, which elſe would drown the world. And becauſe the Church was ſo thin, and there were ſo few godly men in the old world, therefore it was drowned, *Gen.* 7. And becauſe ten righteous perſons were not found in *Sodom*, fire from heaven conſumed it (*Gen.* 18.) God ſeeks for Saints many times to ſtand in the gap, and ſave a Kingdom (*Ezek.* 22. 30. *Jer.* 5. 1.) and yet ſometimes Kingdoms are not ſaved, though many ſuch ſtand in the gay. Except the Lord turn away his anger, *theſe Porters of the world* ſhall not ſupport it, theſe ſpiritual *Atlas*'s ſhall faint and fall under him. The Heathens had a fiction of a mighty Gigantine man, whom they called *Atlas*, him they fancied bearing up the frame of nature: it is moſt true in a ſpiritual ſenſe, the Saints bear up the world; yet if the Lord turn not away his anger, the world muſt totter and fall too, notwithſtanding theſe helpers. For the Saints do not bear up the world, or ſave Kingdoms from wrath, by giving the leaſt ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God (that's the ſole Prerogative of Jeſus Chriſt) but only by imploring the mercy of God. Or they are therefore ſaid to turn away the wrath of God from a people, becauſe God will not pour out his wrath upon that people, while his Saints are mingled with them. The tares are let grow, leſt in pulling them up, the wheat ſhould be pulled up alſo. It is good for the worſt to have the neighbourhood of thoſe who are good.

Qui portant orbem. Vulg.

Rab Sol. Ei ſuccumbent conſpiratores pot miſſimi. Id eſt, licet qui

Further, More generally, theſe proud helpers are ſuppoſed to be Kings and Common-wealths, joyned in ſtrongeſt confederacies; and then the ſenſe is, If God come againſt a Nation, though it joyn with other Nations, though hand joyn in hand, the hand of

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one King in the hand of another, yet it shall not escape or go unpunished.

The proud helpers shall stoop under him.

cum arrogantia & superbia alium auxilium pollicentur. Vatabl.

There is yet another interpretation, which restrains and limits the word *Rahab* particularly to *Ægypt*, *Unless the Lord turn away his anger, helpers out of* Egypt *shall stoop under him*, or *Egypt helping shall stoop under him.* We find frequently in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, that *Egypt* is called *Rahab*: And that name did well suite with *Egypt*, which was both a strong and a proud Kingdom, *Psal.* 87. 4. *We will remember Rahab and Babylon*, that is, *Egypt* and *Babylon*. *Egypt* and *Babylon* are matcht together for pride, and for oppression, persecuting the people of God. And *Isa.* 51. 9. *Art not thou it that hath cut* Rahab, *and wounded the dragon?* That is, Art not thou (O Lord) he that didst cut *Egypt* in pieces, when they opposed thy people, and woundedst *Pharaoh* in the midst of the red sea. In the 26th of this book of *Job*, verse 12. some translate *Rahab*, *Egypt*: we render the Text thus, *He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth thorow the proud*; so we, *By his understanding he strikes thorow Rahab*, that is, thorow *Egypt*, say others. And so they make that Text and this an argument, that the book of *Job* was penned after the deliverance of the people of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and that in these passages *Job* had reference to the mighty work of God, in destroying the *Egyptians* at the red sea. Taking the word thus, the Text is, *Unless the Lord turn away his anger*, Egypt *shall stoop under him*; as if he had said, *Do you not remember a late instance of Gods power?* Egypt *thought to contend with God, to hold his people in bondage whether he would or no, when he had a mind to bring them forth; but you know* Egypt *stooped: God brought down the pride, and abated the strength of it.*

Superbi & eorum patroni. Appellatur Ægyptus hoc nomine, propter summam suam superbiam.

Ex circumstantiis horum locorum non valde incongruum est, hanc vocem sumi pro Ægypto & pro Pharaone in mare demerso. Bold. & Rab. sol.

And that other place (*Chap.* 26. 12.) may be glossed thus, *He divided the sea by his power*, that is, the red sea, *and by his understanding he struck thorow Rahab*; that is, when the *Egyptians* pursued his people, he destroyed them. Which interpretation carries a very clear proof that *Job* alludes to the deliverance of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and therefore lived after the time of that deliverance; though others who grant the exposition, deny the inference, maintain that *Job* spake this prophetically, not historically. This we know, that *Egypt* was a place much sought to for help, and therefore

Loquitur prophetice Bold. *Adjutores Ægypti, i. e. angeli ejus gentis. Ut in prophetia Danielis, princeps Persidis.*

therefore it is elegantly said, *If the Lord turn not way his anger*, Egypt *shall stoop*; that Nation which hath bin so often called out to help and relieve other Nations, that Nation which hath so often helped and relieved other Nations, shall not be able to help, *Isa.* 31. 1. *They go down to* Egypt *for help*, as if *Egypt* had been as a City of refuge, or the place of common resort for help. And *Isa.* 30. 7. *The* Egyptians *shall help in vain*; the Text is very appliable to this point; we read it thus, *The* Egyptians *shall help in vain, and to no purpose, therefore have I cryed concerning this, their strength is to sit still.* Their strength shall not deliver you, they shall help in vain, therefore I have warned you (saith the Prophet) to sit still, to be quiet with your own strength, and it is better to do so than to go down thither for help. But the word which we translate *strength*, is, that in the Text, *Rahab*; and we may render the whole thus, *The* Egyptians *shall help in vain, and to no purpose, therefore I cryed to them in this thing, They are proud, or only pride, Therefore sit still.* As if he had said, Will ye go to *Egypt* for help? Ye go but to a proud people for help, and ye had better have no helpers, then proud helpers, ye had better be quiet and sit still at home, for they shall help you in vain. So it is an elegant allusion to their nature and disposition. The truth is, proud helpers are very unsafe helpers, for the Lord resisteth the proud, and I wonder how they can help us to resist our enemies, who are resisted by the Lord himself? They will prove but ill friends to us, who have the Lord for their Enemy.

Superbia tantū est quiesce: for tasse vult dicere, nihil aliud esse in ea quam superbiam.

They shall stoop under him.

The word is often used for worshipping, it imports likewise any casting down or abasement, because we in the worship of God ought to be exceedingly abased and humbled before him, *Psal.* 38. 6. *I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly.* So Habak. 3. 6. *The perpetual hills did bow*, that is, the power (for it is conceived to be a continued Allegory) of the great Monarchs, who were as the mountains and hills of the world, bowed under the Lord. The word is used to the same sense (*Isa.* 49. 23.) where the Lord promiseth his people, *That Kings shall be their nursing Fathers, and Queens their nursing Mothers, they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet.* The Church shall have the honour to be honoured by the Kings and Princes of the world, they being converted shall bow down so low to the Sce-

Est valde dejici et penitus humiliari, hoc loco servilem potissimum conditionem designat.

pter

pter of Jesus Christ, held forth by the Church, as if they would lick up the very dust, and shall employ their power and authority for the good and protection of the Church. The speech of *Israel* (Gen. 27. 29.) in his prophetick blessing upon *Jacob*, *Let thy mothers sons bow down to thee*, and of *Jacob*, in his, upon *Judah* (Gen. 49. 8.) *Thy fathers children shall bow down before thee*, note greatest honour and subjection to them both.

The meaning of all is plainly this, *That except the Lord himself suspend his own act, and restrain his anger, no power in heaven or earth, how strong, how proud, how confident of success soever, is able to force him, or to alter him. Helpers shall not help themselves, much less those to whose help they come, against the mind and purpose of God.* Observe here first,

Those passions which are ascribed to God, are fully under the command of God.

The passion of anger is ascribed to God, yet the anger which we say is in God, hath no power over God : Mans anger usually *masters* him ; but God is alwayes *master of his anger* ; that is, he can turn and with-draw his anger when he pleaseth. There is no perturbation in God ; when he is offended, he is not moved ; his motions are all without upon the creatures, he hath none in his own bosom. The passions of the *Lord* are his most serious *counsels* and determinations ; and we therefore say, he is angry because those *counsels* of his acted, look like the effects of anger. Secondly, observe,

That, *It is not in the power of man to turn away the anger of God.*

He doth not say, except men by prayer or other means stop the anger of God, but, *Except the Lord withdraw his anger all help is vain.* Prayer is said to appease the wrath of God, and to stay his anger; *Moses* stood in the gap, and *Aaron* came out with incense to turn away his wrath; yet it is an act of Gods will, which turns away his anger, not the force of our prayer; prayer therefore prevails with God, because he hath said, it shall. He is infinitely free when himself acknowledges that we lay the powerfullest restraint upon him : when the Lord is turned by prayer, it is his will to be turned ; it was his counsel, and is his command that prayer should be made as a means to turn him ; and it is his promise, that he will turn to us when we pray. Then it appears to us that the Lord hath decreed to do a thing, when he stirs up the hearts of his people to pray for the doing of it, and that he is purposed to withdraw his anger, when he draws out their hearts strongly to entreat his favour. Thirdly, observe,

That,

That, until God be appeaſed towards a perſon or a people, there is no remedy for them in the world.

The proud helpers ſhall ſtoop under him. If the helpers themſelves fall, who can riſe by theſe helpers? if they are caſt down, how ſhall we be upheld by them? What if the people of a provoking Nation aſſociate themſelves together, or aſſociate themſelves with other Nations, or call in help and aid from all that are round about them, ſhall they therefore eſcape in their wickedneſs? they ſhall not eſcape. Unleſs God help our helpers, they are helpleſs to us. When many companions, and great Commanders repaired to *David* at *Ziklag*, *David* went out to meet them (*Chron.* 12.17.) *and ſaid, if ye be come peaceably to help me, mine heart ſhall be knit to you; but if ye be come to betray me*, &c. *Amaſai* who was chief of the Captains, anſwers (*v.*18.) *Thine are we*, David, *and on thy ſide, thou ſon of* Jeſſe: *peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thy helpers, for thy God helpeth thee!* Our helpers cannot give us peace, unleſs God give them peace; our helpers muſt be helped by God, before they can give us help. The anger of God breaks all the ſtaves we lean on, and makes them as reeds, which wound rather then ſupport; till God is quiet all is unquiet, and when he is unpacified, men ſhall be unpacified, or their peace ſhall be to our loſs. As if he withdraw his anger, enemies ſhall oppoſe in vain: ſo except he withdraw his anger, friends ſhall help in vain.

Laſtly, *They who ſtrive to deliver thoſe whom God will deſtroy, ſhall fall themſelves before God.*

If God be reſolved upon the thing, not only they that are helped, but the helpers alſo ſhall ſtoop under him: helpers cannot help themſelves when he is angry; they ſhall be like Idols, which have eyes and ſee not, hands and cannot act, either to ſave themſelves, or thoſe that truſt upon them. The greateſt ſtrength in the world without God, it is no better then an Idol, which is nothing in the world. Strength cannot be ſtrong for it ſelf, and help cannot help it ſelf. Our help ſtands in the Name of the Lord, which made heaven and earth, and not in the name of any creature under any part of heaven, or upon the face of the whole earth.

JOB

JOB, Chap. 9. Vers. 14, 15.

How much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to reason with him?
Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer: I would make supplication to my Judge.

JOB having in the former passages of this Chapter lifted up the glory and majesty of God, in his power and justice, and shewed the utter insufficiency of creatures to implead his justice, or to rescue themselves out of the hand of his power; he now draws his speech nearer home, and calling his thoughts from those remoter journies up to the heavens, and among the stars, over the mountains and hills, down to the depths of the sea, and foundations of the earth, about all which he had discoursed; I say, calling his thoughts from these remoter travels, he comes now closer to the matter, and from all those premises deduces a conclusion in the words of the Text, to vindicate himself from that charge, which his friends laid upon him, as if he were a contender with the power, or an accuser of the wisdome and justice of God: From the folly and blasphemy of both which imputations, he disasperseth himself in these two verses, by an argument taken from the greater to the less, and we may form it up thus:

He who is so strong, wise and just, that all the powers in heaven and earth are not able to oppose or stay him; surely I I alone, or single I, a poor weak creature, am not able to oppose or stay him.

But (as I have cleared by those former instances) *God is so strong, wise and just, that all the powers of heaven, the Sea, the mountains, and the pillars of the earth, the Sun, Moon and Stars, together with the greatest and mightiest of the children of men, are not able to resist him.*

Therefore I poor weak creature, lying here in this sad condition, am not able (nor have I any design) to do it.

Cum robustissimæ illæ creaturæ, montes, mare, cœli, ei cedant, & quæcunq; robore efferuntur & præstant, quanto minus ego? Iffer l.

Only the conclusion of this syllogisme is expresst, in the fourteenth and fifteenth verses, the premises are couched in the foregoing context.

Here take notice in general, that *Job* falls in the conclusion some-

somewhat below the premises. There the intendment was to demonstrate strongest creatures unable to resist the power of God; But *Job* speaks lower of himself, I am so far from being able to set my strength against the strength of God, that I acknowledge I am not able to hold discourse with him, or to speak with him about these things, I have not only no power to oppose, but I have no words to oppose him.

Vers. 14. *How much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to reason with him?*

Si robusti nihil valent contra illum, quanto minus ego debilis et infirmus homuncio? Dru.

How much less.] The word is used in the fourth Chapter, *How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay?* Both Texts bear the same sense. *If he charge his Angels with folly, and put no trust in those his servants, then, how much less in them who dwell in houses of clay?* So the argument lies here, If those mighty and powerfull creatures, and the mightiest of the children of men, are not able to contend with God, *How much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to reason with him?* As if he had said, It never so much as came into my thoughts to contend with God: I confess I have complained grievously about my troubles, and have spoken some things unadvisedly, but it never entred into my heart to quarrel with God, or stand in battel array against him, no not so much as in a battel of words.

Nunquam animo finxi quod vos de me fingitis, me posse aut velle illi ex æquo respondere. Pin.

How much less shall I answer?

Shall I answer.] There is a two-fold answering, both appliable to this Text.

First, There is answering by way of fact, a real answer, or answering to a condition. Thus one man answers another that is of equal power and strength, of the same measure in abilities and gifts with him. Thus also *Solomon* speaks (Prov. 27. 19.) *Face answers face in the water*, that is, the face seen in the water is of the same feature and complexion, with that which looks upon the water. Thus bodies and buildings answer one another, when they carry the same dimensions: and thus money answers all things, because it bears value with every thing.

Secondly, There is answering by word, which is two-fold: First, Contradictory. Secondly, Satisfactory. The former is that which the Apostle forbids servants to use (Tit. 2. 9.) *Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well*

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in all things, not answering again. Servants cannot please their masters, unless they answer to what they are demanded, and they cannot please their masters, if they oppose what is duly commanded, this answering again is unseemly in servants.

The latter kind of answering is that which the Apostle *Peter* charges upon all Christians (1 Epist. 3. 15. *Be alwayes ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.* To answer thus is every mans duty, both to God and man. To answer by contradicting the command of God, is rebellion. To answer by satisfying the demands of God, is a duty. To answer by a proportion to the power or wisdome of God, is infinitely beyond mans ability. *Job* abhorr'd the first; he was ready (as well as he could) to perform the second; and therefore *Job* is chiefly to be understood of the third, *How much less shall I answer him?* That is, I do not look upon my self as a match for God, as if I had strength proportionable to his strength, or wisdome sutable to his, as if I could thunder like him, I do not think that I am able to answer his reason by my reason, no, I am so far from an ability to answer him with reason, that I know not how to chuse out words to reason with him, *How much less shall I answer him*, &c.

From the whole observe before I come to particulars,

A godly mans thoughts are lowest of himself.

Job had gone thorow the severall series of the creatures; and finding them unable to contend with God, concludes himself more unable then they. Doubtless he might have answered God as well as any. If any are able to contend with God, godly men are, they have the greatest strength; Such of them especially as *Job*, a man of that height and elevation of spirit in holiness, of whom God had given his word, That there was none like him in the earth. What creature (Except an Angel) came so nigh the Creatour as *Job*? and yet when he had looked over them all, he saith, *How much less shall I?* he thought any one might enter the lists, and contend with the Lord better then he. Man (having reason) is more able then all the irrational creatures, and amongst men, godly men, and among godly men, they who teach the highest degrees of godliness, are most able, and yet *Job* a man set upon the top and pinacle of all perfection attainable in this life, saith, *How much less shall I?*

They of whom God hath the highest thoughts, have the meanest

thoughts of, and put the lowest rates upon themselves. No man ever received a fairer or more valuable certificate from God then *Job* did, and yet no man could speak more undervaluingly of himself then *Job* did.

Secondly, Observe, *The more we know God, the more humble we are before him.*

Job having much knowledge of God, quickly found out his own utter insufficiency to deal with God; *How much less shall I answer him?* Not, that he had less ability to answer God then others, but being more acquainted with God, and living nearer God then others, he saw his own insufficiency more then others. The more communion we have with God, the more knowledge we have of God, the less and the lower we are in our own eyes. The reason why men are so full of pride, is, because they are strangers from God, they know nothing of him as they ought. And proportionably, as any one is further distant from, or more ignorant of God, the more doth pride prevail upon him, even as humility grows more humble in proportion to his nearer approaches. When *Job* was yet brought nearer to God, he was more humbled, *Ch.* 42. 5, 6. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee*; that is, I have a clearer and more glorious manifestation of thee to my soul then ever, I now perceive thy power, thy holiness, thy wisdome, thy faithfulness, thy goodness, as if they were corporeal objects, as if I saw them with mine eye, *Wherefore I abhor my self in dust and ashes*; he could not go lower in his thoughts of himself, then his expression laid him. Abhorrence is a perturbation of the mind, arising from vehement dislike, or extreamest dis-esteem. Abhorrence, strictly taken is hatred wound up to the height. As exulting is the highest act of joy, and delighting the highest act of love, so abhorring is the deepest act of hatred; and to *abhor, repenting in dust and ashes*, is the deepest act of abhorrence: Thus low *Job* goes, not only to a dislike, but to the furthest degree of it, abhorrence of himself, when he saw the Lord. So *Isaiah* in (the 6th of his Prophecy) when God came near him, and he saw so much of God, cries out, *I am undone, for I am a man of polluted lips*; but did not *Isaiah* know he was a sinful man, a man of polluted lips till then? Yes, but he was never so sensible of it, as then, he saw his own pollution more then ever by the light of the glory of God that shone round about him. He never saw himself so clearly, as when the majesty of God dazled his eyes. When the Sun shines bright

bright into a room, we may ſee the leaſt mote in the air; ſo when the glory of God irradiates the ſoul, we ſee all the motes and atoms of ſin, the leaſt ſpot and unevenneſs of our hearts or lives; this brings the ſoul low, and will keep it ſo. *The more we know of God, the more we honour him, and our ſelves the leſs.* Theſe two are eminent effects of knowing God. As God riſes in our thoughts, ſo we fall. *Paul* who had been wrapt up into the third heavens, and had a multitude of divine revelations, calls himſelf, *The leaſt of the Apoſtles* (1 Cor. 15.9.) and *leſs then the leaſt of all Saints* (Epheſ.3.8.) not that any thing can be leſs then the leaſt. The Apoſtles holy Rhetorick, doth not croſs *Ariſtotles* Philoſophy. But (the original being a double diminutive) his meaning is, he was as little as could be, therefore he puts himſelf down ſo little as could not be, *leſs then the leaſt.* *Job* ſpeaks near him, *How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him?* ἐλαχιστοτέρως

The Queſtion imports an inability in him for reſolution. He thought himſelf ſo much leſs able to anſwer then they, that he could not tell how much leſs. And therefore leaves others to caſt it up, and take the account how ſhort he was of that buſineſs; he knew it was much, but how much it was he knew not, *How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him?*

And chooſe out my words to reaſon with him. בחר

The word ſignifies choice upon exact triall; it is uſed in that ſenſe: *Exod.* 17.9. *Moſes* biddeth *Joſhua* chooſe out men to go and fight with *Amalek*; he did not take them as they came to hand, or lay his hand violently upon them to preſs them, but he adviſedly took his choice, he had pickt men for that ſervice. *David gathered all the children of Iſrael* he had a ſelect company to fetch up the Ark (2 *Sam.*6.1.) and when he undertook the Duel with *Goliah*, the Text ſaith, he went to the brook *and choſe him out five ſmooth ſtones*, they were choiſe ſtones fitteſt for his ſling. As it is among perſons and things, ſo among words, there are choice words: ſome are but rubbiſh, refuſe words; others are precious, wiſe, ſutable words: *How ſhould I chooſe out my words to reaſon with him?* Shall I think by ſetting words in a curious frame to prevail with God? or ſhall I by ſpeaking rhetorically and elegantly overcome him? There is much power in oratory, in choice of words, and therefore the holy Ghoſt forbids the Miniſters of the Goſpel to ſpeak with choice words, in that ſenſe, namely, with rhe-

Elegit. LXX. vertunt περιλέγω & ἐπιλέγω. Exod. 17. 9. cap. 18. 25; *Per* διέρχομαι (Job 34. 4.) *et* παραφέρομαι. Deut. v. 6. *Hinc.* בחור *juvenis ad militiam et negotia electus et idoneus. Loqui ſelectis verbis ornata et compoſita oratione.*

rhetoricall and artificial ſtrained eloquence, which naturally pleaſeth the ear, and takes the heart: which kind of ſpeech, is called, *wiſdome of words* (1 Cor. 2.17.) *and the enticing words of mans wiſdome* (Chap. 2.4.) They, having an aptneſs in them to entice or perſwade, are called enticeing or perſwaſive words. And becauſe he would have little or nothing of the creature ſeen in winning ſouls, therefore the Apoſtle proteſſes he uſed not ſuch eloquence of words. Great Oratours have carried whole Aſſemblies by the ears. And leaſt it ſhould be thought that the Miniſters of the Goſpel convert men with Oratory, therefore they muſt not uſe ſuch *choice words*. It becomes them not, like Rhetoricians and Orators, to poliſh their ſtile with an affected curioſity, and exactneſs of language. But as affected language is ſinfull, ſo neglect or rudeneſs of ſpeech is not without blame. We ſhould labour to ſpeak properly and weightily: ſo it becomes us to chuſe our words, and not to ſpeak till we have heard what our ſelves would ſay. And thus *Job* knew he ought to chuſe his words, when he ſpake to God; but he knew alſo he could not make any ſuch choice, either of rhetorical and perſwaſive words, or of logicall and argumentative words, as might fit him to anſwer God, or reaſon with him. He was aſſured that neither the eloquence of his ſtile could perſwade him, nor the ſtrength of his arguments convince him: *How ſhall I chuſe out words to reaſon with God?*

In the Original the word [*reaſon*] is not found; only thus, *Shall I chuſe out words with him?* To chuſe out words with another bears this elegancy, as if *Job* had ſaid, If I ſhould ſet my ſelf to chuſe words with God, he would chuſe better words then I, more forceable words then I; he is more able infinitely to make choice of words and matter to convince me, then I to convince him: For the word which we tranſlate [*words*] may ſignifie not only words with which matter is cloathed, but the matter it ſelf cloathed with thoſe words. The ſum of all is, I can neither chuſe matter nor words to diſcourſe and argue with God, his invention and judgement about both, infinitely exceeds mine.

רבר

Significat cauſam aut rationem, et ſic eligere verba eſt novas invenire rationes vel argumenta ad ſuam cauſam fulciendam.

M. *Broughton* refers the word [*chuſing*] to *Job*, and not to words, thus, *Shall I chuſe to word it with God?* to plead and debate the buſineſs with God? Surely of all elections I would not make that, I will not chuſe to make many words with God: ſilence and ſubmiſſion I becomes me better. That's a good ſenſe.

But

But here a doubt may ariſe from a paſſage (*Chap.*13.3.) where *Job* ſpeaks thus, *Surely I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with God*; how then doth he here ſay, *Shall I chuſe out words to reaſon with God?* As if he had ſaid, by no means I will not do this thing; and yet there he ſeems very ambitious of the attempt, and confident of the ſucceſs, *I deſire to reaſon with God.*

I anſwer, there is a two-fold reaſoning with God. There is a reaſoning of declaration, and a reaſoning of conteſtation. When *Job* ſaith, *I deſire to reaſon with God*, his meaning is only this, I deſire to declare and ſet forth my caſe and condition before him. We may reaſon with God by way of narrative; he allows us to tell him how it is with us.

Further, *Job* ſpeaks in that 13*th* Chapters comparatively, ſhewing how much he had rather declare his caſe to God, then to his friends: God was a better friend to unboſome himſelf to, then any of, or all his three friends; for he ſaith of them in the very next words, *Ye are forgers of lies, ye are all Phyſitians of no value*; to what purpoſe would it be for me longer to make known my caſe, and ſhew my grief to you? I had rather reaſon with God then man. But as for that other reaſoning, by way of conteſtation and quarrelling with the providence or works of God, *Job* profeſſeth in this place, he had no mind to it: he would never chuſe that task, or ſet himſelf to chuſe out words for that end, it was too high for him. He ſaw it was neither wiſdome nor duty to deal with and undertake God, either with an open, or a cloſed hand, either with logicall ſubtilties, or rhetoricall flouriſhes.

Again, Whereas *Job* ſaith, he would not reaſon with God; it will be queried, May we not reaſon with God at all? The Lord himſelf ſaith (Iſa. 1.18.) *Come let us reaſon together.* If the Lord calleth us to reaſon with him, may we not then reaſon with him? is it not ſinfull modeſtly to refuſe what God offers? To clear that.

I anſwer, There are two wayes wherein we may not reaſon with God.

1. We muſt not reaſon with him in our own ſtrength.
2. We muſt not reaſon with him upon our own worth.

And that is the full meaning of *Job*, *I would not chuſe to reaſon with God*, that is to reaſon with God in my own ſtrength, as if I had

had power to deal with him. Or secondly, *I* would not reason with God upon my own worth, as if there were any thing in me upon which I were able to make it out that God ought not to deal thus with me; and that's clear by the words which follow, *Though I were righteous, yet would I not answer*; that is, I would not at all speak with God standing upon this bottome, or under the title of my own worthiness. In either of these wayes it is sinful to reason with God. But we may reason with God in the way of declaration before spoken of.

In prayer there is a reasoning with God; and the reasonings and pleadings that are in prayer, are the life and strength of prayer. Prayer is not only a bare manifestation of our mind to God, by such a sute or petition; but in prayer there is, or ought to be a holy arguing with God about the matter which we declare, which is a bringing out and urging of reasons and motives whereby the Lord may be moved to grant what we pray for. The prayers of the Saints recorded in Scripture are full of arguments.

I shall shew it in one example, as a tast for the rest; *Jacob* in his distress at the approach of his brother *Esau*, flees to God in prayer (*Gen.* 32.) and he doth more then speak in prayer, he argues, yea, he wrestles with God in prayer. The sum of it is set down (*vers.* 11.) *Deliver me I pray thee*; to the undertaking of this deliverance he urgeth the Lord by no fewer then seven arguments. First, From Gods Covenant with his Ancestours, *O God of my father Abraham*, &c. As if he had said, Remember those names with whom thou madest solemn Covenants of protection both to them and their posterity. The second is from Gods particular command for his journey, Thou saidest unto me, Return, I departed not on my own head, but by thy direction; and therefore thou canst not for thy honour, but free me from danger, seeing at thy word I am fallen into it. Thou O Lord, art even engaged to give me defence, while I yield thee obedience. Thirdly, He puts him in mind of his promises, thou saidst, *I will deal well with thee*, and that includes all other promises made unto him, these he makes as a bulwark to defend, or as his anchor in the storm. This anchor must fail, and this bulwark be broken down before the danger come to me. If thy promise stand, I cannot fall. The fourth is the confession of his own unworthiness. Faith is alwayes humble, and while we are most confident in Gods word, we are most distrustful of our own desert, *I am not worthy of the*

least

least of thy mercies. Though I am thus bold to urge thy Covenant, yet I am as ready to acknowledge my own undeserт ; Thou art a debter by the promise thou hast made to me, and not by any performance of mine to thee. Fifthly, He seeks to continue the current of Gods favour, by shewing how plentifully it had already streamed unto him ; which he doth by way of Antithesis, setting his former poverty in opposition to his present riches, *With my staff I passed this Jordan, and now I am become two bands* ; That is, thou hast blessed me abundantly, and shall my brothers malice blast all ? am I encreased only to make him abound ? The sixth argument is, the greatness and eminence of his peril, verse 11. *I fear least he will come and slay the mother upon the children* ; a proverbial speech in the holy language, like that of cutting off branch and root in one day, both denoting totall excision, or an utter overthrow. Seventhly, He shuts up, by re-enforcing the mention of the promise, which he urgeth more strongly then before ; there it was only, *Thou saidst, I will deal well with thee* ; but here it is, *Thou saidst, in doing good, I will do thee good*, that is, as it is rendred in our translation, *I will surely do thee good*, and therefore let not my brother doe me evil. We see *Jacobs* praying was a reasoning with God, and himself in the issue got not only a new blessing, but a *new name, Israel, a Prince with God, and a prevailer both with God and men.*

And thus we may reason with God in the strength, and for the sake of Christ in all our prayers. For as when God calls for our obedience, he usually adds perswasion to his precept, and reasons with us, as well as directs us ; His commands are not alwayes barely authoritive, and the resolves of his perogative : So, when we call upon God for audience, we should adde perswasions to our petitions, and reason with him, as well as entreat him. Only we should be carefull to reason from right Topicks, and heads of argument, such as these,

First, From the freeness of the grace of God.

Secondly, from the firmness of his promise.

Thirdly, From the greatness of our need, or of the Churches misery.

Fourthly, From all the concernments of his own glory, *&c.* Thus we may reason with God for the doing of any thing we ask according to his will ; and in these reasonings, the spirit, life and strength of prayer consists.

So then, the only thing which *Job* declineth, as ſinfull and unbecoming, is, to reaſon with God as a contender, he might humbly reaſon with him as a petitioner, or as a remembrancer, *Put me in remembrance* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 43.26.) *Let us plead together: declare thou that thou mayeſt be juſtified.* We may declare our cauſe, and we need not fear to declare our ſins, that God may juſtifie us; but we muſt not preſume to declare our righteouſneſs, that we may juſtifie our ſelves: this *Job* diſclaims.

How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him, and chooſe out words to reaſon with him?

Towards the further clearing of theſe words, we may take notice that *Job* puts himſelf under a double relation. In the former part of the verſe he puts himſelf in the Reſpondents place, *How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him?* And in the latter part of the verſe he puts himſelf in the Opponents place, *and chuſe out words to reaſon with him.* His meaning is, If the Lord will object againſt me, I am not the man who dares, or is able to anſwer him. And if I ſhould take upon me to object againſt the Lord, the Lord may, and can eaſily anſwer me. From which notion of the words, two points may be obſerved.

First, *No man can anſwer what God hath to object againſt him.*

The Lord hath a thouſand arguments which we are not able to give him ſatisfaction in (as was touched in the beginning of this Chapter, *verſ.* 3.) *We cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.* If God ſhould caſt a man to hell, what hath he to ſay for himſelf, as from himſelf, when God objects, *Thou haſt ſinned;* if God afflict a man and lay him low, giving him this argument for what he doth, *I am thy Creatour; I formed and made thee: if I break thee to peeces,* what canſt thou ſay againſt me? If the Lord ſhould ſay, *I am thy Soveraign,* I have ſupreme power over thee, may I not doe with thee what I will? What hath man to anſwer? Man muſt be ſilent, and lay his hand upon his mouth: he hath not a word of reaſon, or holineſs to reaſon againſt God in any of his diſpenſations.

Let man (on the other ſide) gather as many arguments as he can to object againſt God, he is able to wipe them all off preſently, to blow them away with a breath. All the ſhifts and apologies, the excuſes and arguings which any make for their ſins, or which they make for themſelves againſt the juſtice and wiſdome of God,

God, are anſwered with a word. So that, put man in the opponents, or in the reſpondents place, he can make no work of it. *ras to*

Secondly, Obſerve from this phraſe, *Shall I chooſe out w^o reaſon with him?*

God is not taken with words.

Fine phraſes and eloquent ſpeeches will not carry it with him, *If we would prevail with God, we muſt ſpeak our hearts to him, rather then our words*; yet we ought to chuſe out words (as was touched before) when we ſpeak to God. As we muſt take heed how we hear, while he ſpeaks, ſo we have need to take heed what we ſpeak in his hearing. That's *Solomons* advice, Eccleſ. 5. 2. *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be haſty to utter any thing before God.* That is, ſpeak not vainly and unadviſedly, thy tongue running before thy wit. Let wiſdome guide thy tongue, and let thy heart ſhew thee wiſdom; *Let not thy heart be haſty to utter*, when it's office is to conceive, not to utter. But how can the heart be haſty to utter? Utterance is the buſineſs of the tongue. The heart is then haſty to utter, when it ſuffers the tongue to utter what it ſelf hath not thorowly concocted by meditation, and made its own. As in the body, ſo in the mind, the third concoction is that which nouriſhes and aſſimilates. So then, *Solomons* meaning is; Let not raw, unboiled, undigiſted thoughts, paſs out into diſcourſes, or be ſtampt into words before the Lord. As there is a ſin of curioſity, ſo there may be a ſin of neglect. *Extreams are equally dangerous.* The diſtance that is between God and us, proclaims this duty of our moſt reverent addreſſes to him. *He is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few*; and yet the fewneſs of words pleaſes God no more then the multitude of them doth. We ſay, *In many words, there can hardly be a ſcarcity of errours*; and in a few words there may be a few errours, poſſibly more errours then words. *Fewneſs*, ſimply taken, is not the grace of words. But, becauſe they who ſpeak but little, doe uſually think the more, and ſo their words are ſteept long in their hearts, therefore few words are uſually *choice words*. It is ſin, if we are well conceited of our words. And it is ſin, if our words be not our beſt conceptions. *How ſhall I chuſe out words to reaſon with him?*

Verse 15. *Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer; but I would make Supplication to my Judge.*

This brings the matter to the height; Who? I reason and plead with God? I answer him? No, *Though I were righteous, yet would I not answer him.* The strength of the argument lies thus, as if *Job* had said, *I am so far from entering a contest with God, that I profess I would not doe it, though I had the greatest advantage and fitness to doe it of any man in the world; though I were righteous I would not do it. I doe not say, that the reason why I would not plead with God, is because I am wicked, sinfull and abominable, more guilty and unrighteous then my neighbours, or then you, my friends, but how righteous soever I were, I would not do it.* Job speaks as a man who would shew how much he dreads the power and strength of another; *What I fight with such a man? I contend with such a man? No, I profess I would not fight with him, though I were as well weapon'd, arm'd and prepared, as any man in the world, I would not come near him.* If there be any armour or weapon, and furniture or preparations which may enable man to contend with God, it is the *armour of righteousness*, and the furnitures of grace. Now, saith *Job*, though I had that armour, *Though I were righteous I would not contend with him.* The Apostle argues much after this rate (1 *Cor.* 13.) about that great point of Gospel-charity, where he telleth us, that all things are as nothing without charity: and he instanceth in those things which stand highest in the thoughts of man, to commend him to the acceptation both of God and man, *vers.* 2,3. *Though I have the gift of Prophesie, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and though I should give my body to be burned, and have not love, what would it advantage me? Though I should give all my goods to the poor, and have not love,* &c. It is possible for a man to give away abundance to the poor, and yet have a dearth of love both to them and to God in his heart: all the love that moveth him may be love to himself; therefore (saith he) *Though I give my goods to the poor, it profits me nothing*; he puts all these suppositions, which are the greatest advantages for heaven (except Christ) imaginable, and yet concludes all, but as sounding brass, or a tinkling Cymbal, nothing but noise without charity. So here, to shew how impossible a thing it is for creatures in their own strength to contend with God, he puts a supposition upon that which

which is most probable to carry us thorow it, *Righteousness, Though I were righteous I were not able to answer him*, no not I.

Though I were righteous.

It is, as if *Job* had further expresst himself to this sense; *I am so far from justifying my self in all my complainings* (which was the things his friends taxed him with) *as if God could finde nothing amiss in what I have spoken, that I freely confess there is not the most considerate, righteous or holy action that ever I did in my life, which I durst bring to the touchstone, to the balance, to justifie my self before God by no, but instead of that I would fall down and abase my self as knowing I am before him, whose eyes (being ten thousand times brighter then the Sun) are able to see unrighteousness, where I see nothing but righteousness: Doe not think I am justifying my self as a righteous man in what I have spoken or done, for though I were righteous, yet I would not (upon that ground) goe about to plead my cause or stand it out with God.* Or thus, I *know I am unrighteous and unclean, but if I were righteous, I would not answer him.*

Here a Question or two must be resolved: As,

First, *Was not Job righteous?* He puts the Question, *Whom, though I were righteous*, was *Job* an unrighteous man? Doth not he himself say (Chap. 29. 14.) *I put on righteousness, and it cloathed me?* Why then doth he here only make a supposition of it, *Whom, though I were righteous*, when as there he makes it a position, that he was cloathed with righteousness.

I answer (to clear this Scripture) Man is righteous in a double opposition. Righteous; first, in opposition to the wicked: and these may be taken in three ranks, either, First, the abominable and profane: Or, secondly, hypocrites and unsincere: Or thirdly, oppressours, & such as are unjust in their dealings toward men. As righteous is opposed to wicked in these three, *profane, hypocrites*, or *oppressors*, so *Job* was a righteous man. *Job* was not profane, he feared God: *Job* was not an hypocrite, he was perfect and udright: *Job* was not an oppressour, the loynes of the poor blessed him. And that's the peculiar sense of the 29th Chapter, I *put on righteousness*, that is, righteousness in all my dealings with men.

Secondly, Righteous is opposed to imperfect, or that which hath any failing or want in it. And in this sense *Job* was not righteous; and that's his meaning here. *Though I were righteous*; that is, though I had the uttermost perfections which a creature is capable

ble of, yet I would not stand upon them, and plead it out with God. The testimony which the Lord gave concerning *Job* (Chap. 1. 1.) is in words of an inferiour sense: this in the Text is above them both. The Lord there certifies, that *Job* was *perfect and upright*. But though he was perfect and upright, yet he was not *righteous*. He was perfect in opposition to insincerity, and he was upright in opposition to injustice, but he was not righteous in opposition to imperfection; *If I were righteous*, as I know I am not.

Justus in judicio opponitur improbo reo, qui causa cadit. Drus.

Further, Righteousness is twofold. There is a righteousness of the person, and a righteousness of the cause, *Though I were righteous*: *Job* doth not forsake the righteousness of his cause, he only disclaimeth the righteousness of his person. I acknowledge I am not righteous in my self, and I will not yield that my afflictions and sufferings argue me unrighteous.

Here another Question arises, for if we take *Jobs* supposition of a man righteous, it will be demanded, May not a righteous person answer God?

Cum hic justitiam sibi tribuit, non de ea agit, quæ ad legis normam possit subsistere: Solum enim Dei tribunal severissimum Christi justitia non reformidat; sed agit de justitia inchoata, quæ quantum vis Deo grata sit, non tamen ad amussim respondet perfectioni illi, quam lex requirit. Merl.

I answer, There is no created righteousness can answer God. *God chargeth his Angels with folly*; he saw evil in them, compared to himself. A righteous Angel cannot stand it out with God, much less the most righteous man. God indeed would have accepted man in the righteousness of works, had he continued in innocency; and yet he might have seen folly in man abiding in innocency, as he doth in those Angels, which continue innocent. No created righteousness can answer God.

But there is a righteousness in which we may answer God; *Jobs* supposition excludes not that, namely, the righteousness of faith which we have by Christ. Man righteous by faith, or by imputed righteousness, may answer God; but man righteousness by works, or inherent righteousness cannot. He that is righteous by the righteousness of faith, hath to answer God, because he hath somewhat of God to answer God with. Faith doth not bring man to answer God, but God to answer God; Christ answers God for every beleiver: and Christ can answer God fully to all the demands of justice, without abatement. Christ hath not compounded with our creditour, for our debts, but paid them to the utmost farthing. A beleiver is able to answer God, and doth answer him every day: when he asks the pardon of sin, he offers the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And that which he offereth by faith, he will stand to and plead with God upon; God hath what he can desire,

desire, or his justice expect; the believer bids him try to the uttermost, if there be any imperfection or flaw in it, he will venture his soul upon it. In this sense man answers God. But *Job* speaks about inherent personall righteousnes, righteousnes of his wayes. Upon this he will not venture a hair of his head, much less his soul and everlasting peace.

Though I were righteous I would not answer him.

There is somewhat further considerable, for as [*righteous*] is a judiciary word, so likewise is [*answer.*] And it implies, that *Job* he would not only not answer God objecting or reasoning, but that he would not answer him, accusing or charging him, judging or sentencing him. I must acknowledge my self to be, what God judgeth me to be, and, that I am worthy to suffer what he judgeth me to suffer.

Respondere, verbum est forense, &c. Sanct.

Si ille me arguet, aut in me sententiam feret, etsi causa mea justa sit, non audebo, illi, respondere aliquid objicienti, aut in me pronunciunti: me enim rationibus obruet, & sua oppinet majestate. Merc.

Hence observe, First, *Job* having shewed the weakness and ignorance of the creature in his former discourse, here you see whither it tended, namely, to prove man to be sinfull and unrighteous. This teaches us,

That all the failings, infirmities and weaknesses which are in man, are the issues and effects of the sin of man.

Man is an unrighteous creature, therefore a weak creature. *Job* argues from the effect to the cause, from the fruit to the root: man hath infirmities upon him, therefore he hath sin in him. Where there is no sin, there is strength, and where there is no sin, there is knowledge. Perfect holiness scatters all the clouds of darkness and ignorance.

Ex effectis causam declarat, unde enim tanta in mentibus hominum caligo & insciitia, unde tanta infirmitas corporum & animorum, nisi a peccato. Merl.

Secondly, *Though I were righteous I would not answer him*; then it follows, *Unrighteous men cannot answer God.*

If a righteous man cannot, can an unrighteous? No marvel if *David* saith in the first Psalm, *The wicked shall not stand in judgment*, for (in a sense) the righteous cannot stand in judgment, that is, they cannot plead their own righteousness before God. Wicked men have nothing to help them, no help without, and none within, they have nothing but sin in them, and they have no Saviour without them. Hence the Apostle *Peter* argues (1 *Pet.* 4. 18.) *If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* If *Abel* be not able to answer God, how shall *Cain*? If *David* cannot, how can *Saul*? They who have not the righteousness of Christ, have nothing but unrighteousness of their own.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Obſerve the vaſt difference that is between the ſpirit and temper of a godly man, and of a wicked man. O the humility of *Jobs* ſpirit! *Job* will not juſtifie his own righteouſneſs, or juſtifie himſelf in his righteouſneſs. A wicked man will juſtifie his ſin, or juſtifie himſelf in his ſin. A *Saul* will juſtifie his diſobedience, but a *Job* will not juſtifie his obedience. *Job* will not take upon him to be a righteous man; though God had told him he was perfect and upright. A wicked man will take upon him to be righteous, though God tell him to his face a thouſand times, that he is vile and filthy. How doe wicked men ſeek for pleas and covers to make themſelves appear righteous! How doe they gild the baſe metall of their hearts, and paint over thoſe rotten poſts to make them appear beautifull! Chriſt tells the Phariſees that they were like filthy ſepulchers full of dead mens bones, yet they would be painted over with the notion of a righteous generation. *Job* who had much righteouſneſs and faithfulneſs in him, would not own them, and modeſtly bluſhes at the praiſe of God, *Though I were righteous, yet I would not anſwer.*

Fourthly, Obſerve, *the righteouſneſs of man is not pleadable before the righteous God.*

Though I were righteous, yet I would not anſwer. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 4.4.) gives a parallel teſtimony, *Though I know nothing by my ſelf, yet am I not hereby juſtified. Paul* knew nothing by himſelf, that is, he had not any guilt upon him that he knew of; he did not allow himſelf in any ſin, but kept his conſcience void of offence, both toward God and toward man; yet (though it was thus with him) he diſclaims all opinion of himſelf, I *am not hereby juſtified*, this is not the plea I have to make before God; he is able to find out failings where I finde none, he knows better then I what I am.

Fifthly, Obſerve, *A godly man looks upon his own righteouſneſs, as no righteouſneſs.*

Whom, though I were righteous I would not anſwer. His ſuppoſition hath negation in it, *I am not righteous. Job* did not deny the work of the Spirit, or the grace of God in him; but he would not own them in his pleadings with God. He could ſtand upon his terms with men,, and let them know who he was, and what he had done (and it was reaſon he ſhould) but before God he had nothing to mention but Chriſt: In reference to the higher degree of grace for ſanctification we muſt *forget all that is behinde*,

and

and press *on to that which is before*: And in reference to the whole grace of justification, we must forget all our sanctification. The less we remember our own righteousness, the more righteous we are in Christ. As we abate in our selves, we encrease in him. Christ draws the picture of an hypocrite to the life (*Luke* 18.) in that parable of a *Pharisee and a Publican*, going up to the Temple to pray; and the design of Christ in that Parable, is held forth at the ninth verse, to be the conviction of such *as trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others*. Now what did this Pharisee? *He thanks God he was not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or as that Publican, and then he minds God that he gave tithes, and kept fasts twice a week.* And so makes a goodly report of himself, both in the negative and in the affirmative, what he was, and what he was not. Never did any good man tell God such a story of his own life, as this Pharisee told. The Saints love to do well, more then to hear well from others, much more then to hear well from themselves; they love to do good, more then to receive good, much more, then to speak good of themselves. When Christ is represented sitting in judgement (*Mat.* 25.35.) he tells the faithfull of all their good deeds, or acts of charity, *I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was a thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye cloathed me*, &c. Hear how the Saints answer, as if they had done no such thing; *when was this Lord? when saw we thee hungry and fed thee?* &c. We have forgot the time. They did so little mind the good they had done, that they remembred not they ever did it. The Lord keeps a faithful record of what his people doe, but themselves do not. It is our duty to remember to do good, but let God alone to remember the good we have done, *The Lord is not unrighteous to forget our labour of love* (Heb. 6. 10) but we lose our righteousness, unless we forget it. If we much remember what we do, God will remember it but little: The servants of God know well enough when they do good (to do good ignorantly, is a degree of doing evil) They know when they do good, and they know what good they do; but when 'tis done, 'tis to them as unknown.

Hezekiah (Isa. 38. 3.) put God in mind of his good deeds, *Lord* (saith he) *remember how I walked before thee with an upright heart*, &c. *Hezekiah* desired the Lord to remember his *uprightness*. So *Nehemiah* in divers passages of that book (*Ch.* 13.14.22.29.31.)

puts the Lord in remembrance of his righteouſneſs. But it is one thing to put the Lord in remembrance of what we have done *hiſtorically*; and another thing to plead what we have done *legally*. Its one thing to ſhew to the Lord the work of his own grace in us; and another thing to mind the Lord of our works to obtain his grace. *Hezekiah* would have God to take notice of what he was to pity him in his ſickneſs, Lord, I am thus, remember the work of thy hands, as I am thy creature; remember the work of thy Spirit, as I am a new creature, as I am thy ſervant. And *Nehemiah* puts all upon the ſcore of mercy: He did not ſay, Lord, remember me for what I have done, anſwer me according to what I have done, but, *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and ſpare me according to the greatneſs of thy mercy* (*Chap.* 13. 22.) If Saints at any time remember God of their works, it is not to ground an argument of merit upon their works, but to ſhew God the workings of his grace and ſpirit.

Though I were righteous I would not anſwer him; What then? What will *Job* do? What courſe will he take for himſelf, if he will not anſwer the Lord? What? This courſe he takes, and it is beſt.

I would make ſupplication to my Judge.

τῇ κείματος αὐτῆ ἀνθησομαι Sept.

The Septuagint render it thus, *I would deprecate his judgement*; that is, I would ſue for mercy. As if he had ſaid, I am not without hope, becauſe I have none in my ſelf: I am not loſt, becauſe I am loſt to my ſelf: I have a ſure way yet left, *I will make ſupplication to my judge*; or as M. *Broughton* reads it, *I would crave pity of my judge*: as if he had ſaid, though juſtice caſt me, yet mercy will releive me. Mercy will help me as well, & honour God more.

לְמִשְׁפָּטִי Ad facientem judicare me. Mont. Eum qui me judicare facit. Pagn.

The word notes humbleſt ſubmiſſion, as when a man begs for his life. *Jacob* (Hoſ. 12. 4.) *wept and made ſupplication.* The brethren of *Joſeph* (Gen. 42. 21.) were exceedingly afflicted at the remembrance of their hard uſuage toward him their brother when they ſold him to the *Egyptians*. We would not hearken when he beſought us; it is this word. Think with how much ſubmiſſion, *Joſeph*, being ready to be ſold unto ſtrangers, ſupplicated his brethren for pity: Or how a man will lie begging at an enemies feet, who is ready to kill him. With ſuch ſubmiſſive language *Job* reſolved to crave pardon and pity at the hands of God.

Thus he obeys the counſel of *Bildad* in the 8*th* Chapter, *If thou*

thou seek unto God and make thy supplication unto him betimes. Job seems to answer, Your counsel is good, friend *Bildad*, *Though I were righteous, I would not answer him*; but (according to your advice) *I would make supplication to my Judge.* The prayers of the Church in greatest straits and distresses, are usually expressed by this word[*supplications*] *All petitionary prayer is supplication*; but because we are much abased,& laid very low at such times, therefore prayer then put up,is specially called supplication. Hence *Solomon* at the dedication of the Temple, putting cases and suppositions of many afflictions incident to that people, still concludes, *At what time they shall confess their sins and pray, and make supplication, then*, &c. (1 Kings 8.) And (*Esth.* 4. 8.) *Mordecai* sends to *Esther*, charging her to go in to the King, What to do? *To make supplication unto him.* The lives of the Jews being given away to satisfie the malice of *Haman*, it was time for her to supplicate in the lowest posture. Thus *Job* had it in the thoughts of his heart *to make supplication to his Judge*; as if he had said, *If I were to stand at the tribunall of an earthly Judge, I would not supplicate, but plead; I would not petition his favour, but stand upon my right; I would not crave his pity, but expect his justice; I would bring forth my reasons and arguments, my proofs and witnesses, this course would I run with an earthly Judge: but my cause being with God, I will only put a petition into the Court, and submit unto him, let him do with me what he pleaseth.* Hence we may observe,

First, *That there is no weapon can prevail with God but only prayer and supplication.*

Jobs thoughts had travel'd thorow all the creatures and found not one of them could stand before God; therefore he resolves to fall down before him. I will make supplication. *Prayer overcometh when nothing else can.* Christ conquered by dying, and we conquer by submitting. And yet it is not supplication as an act of ours; but supplication as it is an ordinance of Gods that prevails with him: he looks upon prayer, as having the stamp of his own institution; otherwise our greatest humblings could prevail no more then our proudest contendings. The Word preached prevails upon the hearr, not as it is the act of a man, who dispenseth it (there is no strength in that) but as it is an ordinance of God, who hath appointed it: So humble supplications obtains much with God, because he hath said it shall.

Etsi opus virtutis exercuero ad vitam, non ex meritis, sed ad veniam convalesco. Precibus itaq; innitendum est cum recta agimus, ut omne quod juste vivimus, humilitate condiamus. Greg.

Secondly, *To make supplication is to crave pity.*

As prayer prevails, so no plea in prayer can prevail, unless we plead *pity, pity, mercy, mercy*; a suppliant looks for all good at the hand of free grace. We at any time have sin enough to procure us evil (Jer. 4. 18.) *Thy sins have procured these things unto thee*: But we never have goodness enough to procure us any mercy. Mercy comes for mercies sake.

Thirdly, In that he saith, *I would make supplication to my Judge*, Observe,

God is the Judge of all our actions and intentions.

Job was in a great contest with men, but (saith he) men are not my Judges. God is my Judge. *It is a comfort to the Saints so remember that God is their Judge. Job* was not afraid of God in that relation; no, it was a rich consolation to think that God was his Judge. He is a righteous Judge, a merciful Judge, a pittifull Judge; we need not be afraid to speak to him under that notion. *Job* saith not, I will make supplications to my father (which is a sweet relation) but (which is most dreadfull to wicked men) he considers God as a Judge: The Saints are enabled by faith to look upon God as a Judge, with assurances of mercy.

Lastly, Observe, *The whole world stands guilty before God.* (Rom. 3. 19.) *Every mouth must be stopped*: *Job* will only make supplication, he had nothing else to do or say, *We do not present our supplications unto thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercy* (Dan. 9. 8.) We can get nothing from God by opening our mouths in any other stile, or upon any other title then this, of an humble acknowledgement of our unworthiness: the lower we go in our own thoughts, the higher we are in the thoughts of God; and we find the more acceptance with him, by how much the less acceptance we think we deserve. *Nothing is gained from God, either by disputing or by boasting. All our victory is humility.*

JOB.

JOB, Chap. 9. Verſ. 16, 17, 18.

If I had called, and he had anſwered me, yet would I not beleive that he had hearkned unto my voice.
For he breaketh me with a tempeſt, and multiplieth my wounds without cauſe.
He will not ſuffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterneſs.

THis holy man having abaſed himſelf in the ſenſe of his own inability and unrighteouſneſs before the Lord, and diſclaimed the leaſt intendment of contending or diſputing with him (as was ſeen in the former context) now confirms it by a further ſuppoſition, in the 16, 17, 18. verſes, and ſo forward. As if he had ſaid, Ye ſhall find I am ſo far from wording it with God, or ſtanding upon mine own juſtification with him (though I have pleaded mine integrity before you my friends) that I here make this hypotheſis or ſuppoſition, *If I had called, and he had anſwered, yet would I not beleive that he had hearkned unto my voice.*

There is much variety in making out the ſenſe of theſe words. The Septuagint read it negatively, *If I had called, and he had not anſwered me, I would not beleive*, &c. Moſt of the Hebrew writers fall very foul upon *Job*, and tax him harſhly for this ſpeech. *What? Would he not believe that God hearkned unto him, when he had anſwered him?* is not this unbeleif a plain denial of providence, or at leaſt of ſpecial providence? *I would not beleive that he had hearkned unto my voice*, is (in their ſenſe) as if he had ſaid, *I think God takes no care, or makes no account of particulars, he looks not after this or that man, what he ſpeaks, or for what he prayes. I can ſcarce believe that my condition is under the care of God, or that he will take notice of me, if I ſhould call upon him; or if I plead before him, what ſhall I get by it? Do ye think he will deſcend to the releif of ſuch a one as I am? Why then do ye move me to call upon him?* &c. *If I ſhould pray, and if he ſhould anſwer me, I can hardly be perſwaded that he will pity me and do me good.*

ἐὰν καλέσω, καὶ μὴ ὑπακούσῃ, Sept.

Aviæ loliginis ſuccum hic aſpergit. Rab. Levi.

Aſſerens Jobum negare providentiam ſive curam particularium. Coc.

Verba diffidentis et deſperantis de divina miſericordia.

A ſecond opinion caſts him into the deeps of deſpair; as if *Job* had altogether laid aſide hope of receiving any favour by calling upon God, or of comfort by putting his caſe to him.

Opinio Rab. Moyſes et R. Levi. *apud* Merc.

But

But all these aspersions are unworthily cast upon *Job*, a man full of humility and submission to the will of God: his frequent prayers and applications of himself to God do abundantly confute all such unsavoury conjectures. But the Jewish Commentatours carry on their former strain, being all along very rigid towards this holy man, very apt to put the worst constructions upon doubtfull passages, and sometimes ill ones upon those which are plainly good.

Judaicum commentum, atq; Jobi sanctitate indignissimum. Pined.

More distinctly.

There is a difficulty about the Grammaticall meaning of one word in the text, which carries the sense two wayes.

If I had called, and he had answered me.

קרא The Hebrew word which we translate [*call*] signifies sometimes to *pray*, and sometimes to *plead* or *challenge*: An act of invocation, or an act of provocation: it is rendred both wayes here. By most, as we, *If I had called upon him*; that is, if I had prayed or made my sute unto him. By some, *If I had sent in my plea* (as to begin a sute of law with him) *or my challenge*, as to enter the combate with him, &c.

Alij, invocare, alii provocare vertunt.

As it is taken for a challenge, so the sense lies thus, If I should stand upon terms with God, and call him to an account to make good what he hath done; *And he had answered me*; that is, if he had condescended to give me an account of his wayes, yet I would not beleive that he had hearkned unto my voice, that is, that he had yielded to me, or acknowledged that he had done me wrong. Shall I, who am but dust and ashes, prevail in my sute and get the day by pleading and contending with the great God of heaven and earth?

Take the word as it signifies invocation, or calling by way of petition (Psal. 50. 15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.* And so two or three interpretations are offered.

First, Some in favour of *Job* conceive that he speaks this only through the infirmity of his flesh, that it was sin within him that spake, and not *Job*; according to that of the Apostle, Rom. 7. *Not I, but sin that dwelleth in me*: So *Job* speaks as if he did not beleive that God would hear him when he pray'd, but whose voice was this? Not *Job's*, but his sins, the corruption, the infirmitie of *Job* gave out such language, not he. As we may say in refer-

Tam infirma est caro, ut etiam proposita divinis promissionibus nolit credere. Isidor. Clar.

reference to an action, *I did it not, but ſin that dwelleth in me*; ſo to a word, *I ſpake it not, but ſin and corruption that dwelleth in me, gave out ſuch language.*

Secondly, *I would not beleive that God had hearkened to me, though he had anſwered me*, may refer to the manner of his prayer or invocation, as not coming up to the height and meaſure of the duty, as not fulfilling that Law of prayer which the Lord requireth; and ſo becauſe his prayers were imperfect and weak, therefore he would not beleive that ever God had taken notice of him, or hearkned to his voice: As if he had ſaid, *You bid me make my ſupplication; if I do, yet I will not beleive that God takes notice of my prayers.* Why? becauſe mine are but cold and unbeleiving prayers, weak and diſtracted prayers, the prayers of a diſtemper'd heart, the prayers of a confuſed ſpirit, ſuch I confeſs mine are; therefore I cannot beleive God will heaken to my voice.

Pleriq; Latini ad eas conditiones referunt quas oratio efficax requirit, quarum defectus non exaudimur atq; ea ratione ſibi timere. Jobum.

But rather in the laſt place, take the ſenſe thus, that *Job* in theſe words breaths out the humility of his ſpirit; as if he had ſaid, *I am ſo far from ſtanding upon my terms with God* (as was ſhewed before) *as if I had hopes to carry it with him by contending, that though I come in the humbleſt manner to invocate and call upon his Name, and I find him ſo gracious and merciful to me as that he doth anſwer me in my requeſts, and grant the thing I deſire, yet I will not believe that he hath hearkned to my voice*, that is, *that he hath done this for any worthineſs in me, in my ſervices or prayers, I will not believe that the anſwer I receive from heaven is obtained by any value which my perſon hath with God.*

Videtur hoc eſſe animi mirabiliter de ſe iſſe, atq; ſibi ſuæq; orationi diffidentis, fidentis vero de ſola divina bonitate. Pined.

Such is the coldneſs and deadneſs, the languiſhment and unbelief of my heart in prayer, ſuch are my prayers, that the truth is, I cannot beleive I am heard, when I am heard, I cannot think my petition granted, when I ſee it is granted. Thus it ſets forth the exceeding humility and lowlineſs of his ſpirit, he would give all the glory unto God in granting his petitions, and take nothing at all to himſelf in making thoſe petitions. *I would not beleive that he hath hearkned to my voyce.*

Non ex diffidentia hoc dicit, ſed ex timore, Dei reveritus judicium. Druſ.

What voice was it then that he believ'd God hearkn'd unto? He hearkn'd to the voice of his Mediatour, to the voice of Chriſt: He hearken'd to the voice of his own free grace: He hearkn'd to the ſounding of his own bowels: He hearken'd to the motions and interceſſions of his ſpirit in me; to the motions and interceſſions of his Son for me. It is not my voyce that hath got the anſwer;

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he alone that hath granted it of his good pleasure in Christ.

I would not beleive that he had hearkned to my voice.

אמן *Credere, stabile esse.*

The word signifies both beleiving and establishing, or to believe and establish; and the reason of it is, because faith settles the heart, *Faith is the establishment of the soul.* An unbeleiver hath no bottom, he is built without a foundation, his spirit is unfixed.

And that act of beleiving [*I would not beleive*] is the generall act of faith, namely, a firm assent to the truth of what another speaketh. An assent to the truth of it two wayes. To the truth of it: First, Historically, that such a thing was spoken or done; And then Logically, that the thing is true which is spoken. When he saith, I would not beleive that God hath done this, his meaning is, I would not assent to it, as done for my sake, or for my voice; not that he would not beleive the thing was done at all. He assented to the word and answer of God, when he did receive it; but in that restriction, he would not beleive it, namely in reference to himself, that he hath hearkned to his voice.

האזין *Græcè ἐνωτίζεσθαι, * Auscultare, inclinationem animi denotat ad alterius dicta. Cujus oppositum est, aures claudere et obturare ad alicujus sermonem. Hinc proverbium.* Surdo narras fabulam. *Hæc verba exactam demissi animi significationem continent. Tunc cum arriserit gratia, time, cum abierit, time* Bernard *Providentia Dei sæpe nobis benevola est, cum nulla benevolentiæ externa præbet argumenta, imo aliquando quem exudit tabire conterit malorum.*

To hearken is more then to hear; * it notes the inclination of the mind, rather then the attention of the ear. As to stop the ear notes the shutting of the heart against obedience, rather then of the ear against audience. To tell a tale to a deaf man, is to speak to one that hears, but will not grant.

From all it appears,

First, That, *Job* speaks very highly of the goodness of God, namely, that God answers prayer, though he hath not respect to the voice of him that prayeth; *though he had answered me, yet would I not beleive that he had hearkned unto my voice.*

Secondly, That, he speaks exceeding humbly and submissively of himself, *my voice*; what am I, a poor creature, that I should think I had carried the matter with God?

Thirdly, That, he speaks very wisely and understandingly concerning the nature and efficacy of prayer, and the means procuring answers of prayer. When man prayes God answers; but he doth not answer because man prayes.

Fourthly, That, he speaks very highly and gloriously of the providence of God, though providence act darkly towards man. We pray, God answers, and doth us good, yet things may go quite contrary in appearance, *If I had called, and he had answered me, yet would I not beleeve that he had hearkned unto my voice,*

voice; why? *He breaketh me with a tempest. God was breaking him, and hearing him at the same time.* God may be doing us good, when the signs he gives speaks evil; he hears and answers us praying to him, when we think we hear him thundering terribly against us.

Hnce, first, We learn, That

Prayer is a calling upon God.

Then the heart should be very attentive upon God in prayer. How can we expect God should hear us, when we do not hear our selves! in prayer we call upon God, therefore we should call upon our selves to consider how and what we pray.

Secondly, Note. *Prayer granted is prayer answered.*

If I had called and he had answered me. The Lord from heaven speaks to us in every act of his providence; his speaking to us is in doing for us. The works of God are answers to man. God doth not answer audibly or sensibly; there is a voice in his dispensations. As men (*Prov.* 6. 13.) So the Lord speaks to us with his feet, and answers our prayers with his fingers, that is, his works and wayes are demonstrations of his will in answer to our prayers.

Thirdly, In that *Job* tells us, *He would not beleive*, &c. we are taught.

That faith is a necessary ingredient in prayer.

This negation of his faith in prayer, implies the need of faith in prayer. When I pray I should beleive, but as my case stands I cannot beleive, clouds and darkness are upon me. Faith is the strength of prayer, *Whatsoever ye ask in prayer beleiving, ye shall receive* Mat. 21. 22. Prayer without faith, it is like a Gun discharged without a bullet, which makes a noise, but doth no execution; we may put out a voice in speaking, but except we put out faith in speaking, we do but speak, we do not pray. As the word of God coming upon us doth us no good, prevails not upon our hearts, unless it be mixed with faith (Heb. 4. 2.) *The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.* So the word that goes out from us, the word of prayer, prevaileth not at all with God, obtaineth nothing from him unless it be mixed with faith; all the promises are made to believers, *All things are possible to them that beleive* (Mar. 9. 23.) *Ask in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed* (Jam. 1. 6.) To ask in faith, is to ask, resting upon the power of God, whereby he is able, upon his truth,

whereby he is faithfull, and upon his goodneſs in Chriſt, whereby he is ready to make good his promiſes. He that asks thus doth not waver. *Few are without doubting, but all ſound believers are without wavering.* The Greek word ſignifies to queſtion, or diſpute a thing, a degree beyond doubting; as when a man is at no certainty with himſelf, being ſometime of one mind, ſometime of another. The judgement being ſo carried, that the man is at variance with his own breſt, or is between two wayes, not knowing which to take. We tranſlate the word (in the 4*th* of the *Romans*, verſ. 20.) by ſtaggering. *Abraham ſtaggered not at the promiſe of God through unbeleif.* The ſimilitude which the Apoſtle *James* uſes, illuſtrates this ſenſe, *he that wavereth is like a wave of the ſea*, which by tempeſtuous winds is ſometimes carried up to heaven, and anon down to the deep. A man who is toſſed with ſuch waves of unbelief, ſtaggers like a drunken man, in his practice and profeſſion; he is now on this ſide, to morrow on that; he doth not only ſtagger or halt in his way, but he ſtaggers or halts between two wayes, and is therefore called (verſ. 8.) *A double minded man*; the prayers of ſuch a man are faithleſs prayers, and therefore fruitleſs prayers, *Let not that man think he ſhall receive any thing* (unleſs a rebuke, and a deniall) *of the Lord* (verſe 7.) There are no promiſes made to ſuch, and therefore no mercies convayed to ſuch. Beleiving prayer is gaining prayer; yet they who beleive leaſt, preſume moſt. Hence the Apoſtles check, *Let not that man think*; as if he had ſaid, I know ſuch will flatter themſelves into a perſwaſion of great matters; they will have high thoughts, but they ſhall receive nothing.

Obſerve, Fourthly, *That how ſtrongly ſoever a godly man acts faith, for the anſwer of his prayers, yet he hath no faith that his prayer deſerves an anſwer.*

I would not beleive that he had hearkned to [my] *voice.* Chriſt calleth the Spouſe to prayer (Cant. 2. 14.) *Let me ſee thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for ſweet is thy voice, and thy countenance comely.* Chriſt loves prayer. *The prayers of the Saints upon earth are muſick in heaven.* That invitation to the Spouſe, *Let me hear thy voice*, ſeems to be an alluſion to thoſe, who loving muſick, call upon a friend who hath a good voice, or exquiſite skill to play upon an inſtrument, *Come, ſing us a ſong, play us a leſſon, let us have a fit of mirth.* Thus I ſay, Chriſt ſpeaks to the Church, *Come, let me hear thy voice, 'tis ſweet, I know thou haſt a ſweet one.* But

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the Saints judge their own voices harsh and unharmonicall, they are apt to think their prayers jarrings and discords, at the best but a rude noise, not a composed air in the ear of God. *Faith* makes our prayers melodious, because it carries us out of our selves. A beleiver lives not in the sound of his own prayers, but of Christs intercession. What are we that we should expect any acceptance upon our own account? or say, this *We* have gained, this *We* have obtained, thus God hath heard *us*, or thus we have wrestled it out with God? as when we have performed all our duties, we must say, *We are unprofitable servants*; so when we have obtained all our sutes, we must say, *We are unprofitable petitioners*; I will not beleive that God hath hearkned unto my voice. What's mans voice, that God should hear it?

Observe, Fifthly, *That a godly man sometimes cannot beleive his prayer is heard, when it is heard.*

Though he calls and God answers, yet (like *Job*) he beleives not that God hath hearkn'd to his voice; he cannot think his prayer is heard, though one should come and tell him it is heard. When the Jews returned from *Babylon*, the mercy was so Great, that they could not beleive they had it, when they had it; *When thou didst turn our captivity, we were as them that dream* (Psal. 126. 2.) The deliverance was incredible, they could not think they were delivered. Their return to *Jerusalem* was suspected for a dream of it in *Babylon*. The Church prayed without ceasing for *Peter*, when he was in prison (*Act.* 12. 5.) yet when the Lord brought him out of prison, & he was knocking at the door of the house where they were assembled, while they were knocking at the door of heaven for his deliverance, yet they would not beleive the report of the damsell, who said he stood before the gate; they tell her she is mad, and when she affirm'd it with sobriety, as well as vehemency, then, they have another help for their unbelief, *It was not Peter but his Angel.* Thus it is to this day with the Saints, in their great personal sutes and petitions, both about spiritual things and temporal, they are so overcome, astonished and amazed at the goodness of God, that though they see the thing done, yet they can hardly beleive it is done. As if a Prince should send a message to a poor man by some great Lord, and tell him he hath bestowed honour and favour upon him, the poor man is ready to say, I cannot beleive it: the blessing is too big for him to digest, and let down into his narrow heart; no, saith he, sure it is not so. Though the people of God ever preserve a high

Forsan hoc dicit, quia sæpe præ nimia lætitia non credimus verum esse quod maxime verum esse optamus. Drus.

high respect and esteem of the works of God towards them, yet their faith is often below his workings, and they cannot receive or take in mercy so fast as it cometh; faith widens the vessel of the soul to receive much, but God can pour in faster then faith can widen the soul to receive.

Sixthly, Observe, *Faith hath its decayes.*

Faith doth not keep up alwayes at the same height, in the same plight and degree: There is a faith which beleives that God doth answer before he answers, and there is a faith that cannot beleive God will answer, when he hath answered. Faith in strength prevents the answer of God. As God in answering sometimes prevents our askings (Isa. 65. 24.) *Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear*: So faith saith, *Before the Lord giveth I know I have it, before the Lord doth this thing, I see it is done.* Faith in its strength realizes the mercies of God before they have a being, and is an evidence to us of what we see not. When mercies are but in their principles, in their conception and birth, or at most, when they are but in their cradle and swadling-clouts, faith speaks as gloriously of them, as if they were fully acted and grown up before the eye. Strong faith in God (like God himself) quickens the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were. Weak faith deadens the quick, and calleth those things which are, as if they were not. The *Israelites* were no sooner over the red sea, but they beleived themselves in the land of *Canaan* (*Exod.* 15. 13, 14, 15.) and in their Song tell the story of the submission and fears of the uncircumcised Nations round about, which yet their after unbelief kept off fourty years.

There is a further understanding of the words, which I shall clear in connexion with that which followeth.

I would not beleive that he had hearkned to my voice; For he breaketh me with a tempest; as if the reason why he doubted his [*voice*] was not heard, lay in this, because of those continual breakings which were upon him, *I would not believe that he had hearkened to my voice, for he breaketh me with a tempest, & multiplieth my wounds without a cause*: As if *Job* had said, the dealings of God are such towards me, that I know not how to make it out that I am heard: For though the Lord in some things carries it so graciously toward me, that I have great assurance I am heard, yet many things appear, reporting that I am not heard. Afflictions continued

Etiamsi Deus me precantem exaudierit, minime credo cum malorum nimbo me obruat.

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are no evidence that prayer is not heard, yet usually it is very inevident to an afflicted person, that his prayer is heard.

I shall now examine the 16, and 17. verse, as holding a reason why *Jobs* faith was thus weakned.

Vers. 17. *For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause.*

שער *Turbo.*

Job's sorrows put him to his rhetorick still, *He breaketh me with a tempest.* An expression raising his afflictions to the height, yet, not beyond the reality of them, *He breaketh me with a tempest.*

שׁוּף *Contudit, contrivit, obminuit.*

The word we translate [*break*] signifies an utter contusion, or the totall ruining of a thing or person, the dashing of either to pieces. The word is used reciprocally of Christ and the devil, in that great and first promise of Christ, the seed of the woman. (*Gen.* 3. 16.) *It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* Christ having infinite power, utterly destroyed the Serpents power; he spoyl'd and ruin'd him for ever: the Apostle phrases it so (Coloss. 2. 15.) *He spoyled principalities and powers*; he took away the prey or booty of souls, which they had got; and led them disarm'd like prisoners of war. And the devil did what he could to ruine and spoyl Christ, to break Christ to pieces. Thus Christ and Satan strove and contended one with another. And the word (*Shuph*) hath an elegant nearness in sound to our English. We call that noise which is made by the ruder motion of the feet, *shuffling*, and when men contend much, we hear the shuffling of their feet. *Job* was striving and shuffling with God in prayer, and God was striving and shuffling with *Job* in storms and tempests.

He breaketh me with a tempest.

The word signifies not only *storms and tempests*, but likewise *A little hair or twined threed.* So the *Chaldee Paraphrast* translates it here, *He disputes or contends with me to a hair, or to a threed*; making the sense out thus, *I will not beleive that God hath answered me*; why? *He standeth with me upon the smallest matters; he disputes with me to a hair, and debates every thing to a threed.* As *Abraham* said to the King of *Sodome*, (Gen. 14. 23.) *I will not take any thing that is thine from a threed even to a shoe-latchet*; that is, I will not make the smallest gain by thee: So to dispute to a hair, or to a threed, notes contending upon or about the smallest differences.

Chaldæus legit, usq; ad filum lineum, vel ad filum pilorum subtiliter disputat me cum.

שערה *Filum significat.*

But

But generally the word is rendred a *Tempest*; and thus God is often described contending with man, (Nah. 1.3.) *His way is in the whirlewind, and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet*; that is, he sends storms and whirlwinds, by these afflicts the children of men; and as an army of horsemen, raises clouds of dust from the earth with their feet: so the Lord raises the dust of clouds with his, *Behold a whirlewind, or a tempest of the Lord is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlewind; it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked*, Jer. 23. 19.

To break with a tempest, or with a whirlewind, implies two things.

1. A sudden and an unexpected affliction. Tempests are never welcomet, and but seldome looked for: When the sea is so calm and smooth that you may throw a die upon it a storm ariseth in a moment, and the vessel indanger of a wreck.

2. It noteth the fierceness and violence of an affliction. Tempests are the most violent motions, they come with power. A tempest is irresistible, who can stand before it? Who can contend with storms and windes? When the Lord made totall conquests of his enemies, he contended (in the letter) by storms and tempests. As in the 10*th* of *Joshua*, and in the first of *Samuel* (Chap. 7. 10.) *When the Philistines drew near to battel against Israel, the Lord thundered with a great thunder that day upon the Philistines and discomfited them.* The story is famous of a legion of Christian souldiers, called the *thundering legion*, because by prayer they obtained a refreshing rain for the army in which they were commanded, and a terrible storm of thunder and lightning, *&c.* upon the enemy. The word is used figuratively in war, when besiegers coming to a Town or Fort are resolved to carry it presently what ever it cost them, they are said *to storm the place or to get it by storm.* The Prophet alludes to this (Isa. 25.4.) *When the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall*; that is, when their rage shall be at the highest, most violent and impetuous, then the Lord will be a *refuge from the storm.* The same God who saves many from the storms of man, did himself storm *Job.*

He breaketh me with a tempest.

Job was storm'd, yet supposes his prayer was answered. Hence observe,

Prayers may be heard and answered, when greatest afflictions are upon us.

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Do not think your prayers are lost, because your afflictions are not removed, or that God doth not hear you, because he doth not presently relieve you. God forbears when he doth not deny. He answers to our profit, when he answereth not to our feeling. He answereth to our spiritual interest, when not to our corporall. The sick man calleth to the Physitian to take away the bitter, loathsome potion; and the wounded man calleth to the Chyrurgion to take away those corroding plaisters, and to forbear those torturing operations. But the one gives him his portion, and the other lances his sores, and layes corrosives to his flesh; both these, while they vex the patient, answer him: for what's the reason, why the patient would have his bitter potion taken away? it is not because he would be better? and why would he have those painfull operations forborn? is not because he would have ease: Now, for those very reasons the Masters of those professions keep him to both; neither could they give him his desire, but by doing contrary to his will. Thus also the Lord is healing us, when we think he is only wounding us, and fullfilling our desires, while we cry out he is crossing them.

Quædam non negantur, sed ut congruo tempore dentur, differuntur. Aug.

Exaudit sæpe ad profectum, licet non ad votum. Aquin. *in loc.*

Sævitur in vulnus, ut homo sanetur. Aug.

Secondly, Observe, *Even while we are praying, the Lord may be thundering, he may be breaking us when we are beseeching him.*

We must learn to keep our duty, whatsoever the dealings of God be; whether it be fowl weather or fair, pray still; whether it be storm or calm, go on in prayer still. Pray still though God break still. It is our duty to pray, and it is Gods priviledge to break.

Thirdly, Observe from the loftiness of the language.

That the Lord layes very sore afflictions upon those that are very dear to him.

Job expresseth his afflictions by *breaking with a tempest. Stroaks from the clouds are most terrible.* The same afflictions and scourges which he layes upon his enemies, he layes (in the matter, yea, and often in degree) upon his best friends. What can the Lord do to his greatest enemies, but break them with a tempest? he doth not only chasten with a rod, but sometimes scatter with a storm; he hath not only a sword, but a thunder-bolt for his servants; he hath terrible stroaks and blows for them who lie in his arms, and live in his embraces. Therefore we cannot distinguish men by the matter, no nor by the measure of their afflictions; that which is a judgement to one, is but a chastening to another, with the same weapon he wounds a friend and destroyes an enemy.

Fourth-

Fourthly, Observe, *That afflictions continued cause us to suspect that our prayers are not answered.*

Why doth *Job* think that God hearkned not to him? *I would not beleive* (saith he) *that God had hearkned unto my voice; why? because still he continues to break me.* Faith is put hard to it at such a time; and this is the thing which stumbled *Job*, he could not tell how to make it out, that God had heard his prayer for him, because he heard so great a noise of tempests and storms against him. It is very difficult for faith to see mercy thorow clouds of trouble. It is a hard thing for faith to look upon the pleased face of God thorow a lowring tempest, or to beleive the calmness of Gods heart to us in troublesome dispensations. Therefore he speaks here as if his faith were even master'd. The providences of God are often too hard for man. And with this temptation Satan helps on unbelief. If he come to a soul in affliction, which keepeth close to his interests in Christ; *Yea* (saith he) *you may do so though afflictions were upon you, but yours are more then afflictions, yours are tempests and storms: God dealeth with you as with an enemy, yours are no ordinary matters, yours are like the portion he gives to those he hates; I would not weaken your faith, because of a chastening rod, but you are beaten with scorpions, and will you still beleive?* Can God love you and deal thus with you? Thus the serpent whispers in those louder tempests of affliction.

Licet Deus vere exaudiat, tamen homo in miseriis constitutus se exaudiri non credit. Aquin.

Fifthly, Observe, That

Afflictions continued cause us to suspect that our prayers shall not be answered.

And so I find some rendering the former verse in connexion with this, *If I have called, and he hath answered me, yet will I not beleive that he will hearken to my voice.* As if he had said, I know God hath heard me heretofore, but I fear he will hear me no more; because I find his hand so heavy upon me. Surely then he hath forgotten to be gracious, and hath shut up his tender mercies. *Former experiences can hardly keep faith whole, while we are under present breakings.*

Lastly, If we take the words, as importing a calling to God for answer in a way of provocation (as was shewed before) then the sense is; *If I had an ambition to contend with God, and he had answered me, by condescending to that course, yet I could not beleive he had hearkned to my voice*, that is, I could not beleive that he had yielded the cause to me; why? because he goes on still to break

me

me with tempests; he follows me with trouble still; he shews he hath done me no wrong, in my former afflictions, by his going on to afflict me still, he is so far from acknowledging the least injustice, in what is past of my sufferings, that I suffer more, *He breaks me with a tempest, and*

Multiplies my wounds without cause.

But is not this injustice to multiply wounds without cause? Is not this a charge of blasphemy upon God? May we not think that now Satan had his wish, and that *Job* cursed God indeed?

The Hebrew word which we translate, *without cause*, hath been opened, *Chap.* 1. 9. and *Chap.* 2. 3. and it hath occurred elsewhere. Here, *He multiplies my wounds without cause*, is not a charge of injustice upon God, *Job*'s heart was far from the least thought of that, as you may see in all the dispute: But it is an acknowledgment of the soveraignty and power of God, *Though he hath wounded me already, yet he may wound me still, without giving me a reason; or though I have given him no cause.* What? Do ye think God would yield to me, if I should contend with him? *He multiplieth*, or, *He multiplieth my wounds without cause*, that is, without giving me any account hitherto; and do you think that now I shall have liberty to call him to an account; or that he will give me one? *He wounds without cause*, is* without cause manifested. God hath not told me the reason of his chastenings. And I do not perceive the reason. I know not why he contendeth with me. And so he expounds what he spake at the 12*th* verse, *Lo, he passeth by me, and I see him not.* There are mysteries in providence. Mans eye is not clear enough to see all that God doth before his eyes. *Job is his own Expositour.* This latter expression gives us a comment upon the former. And it is observable, that both in this book, and in the whole body of the Scripture, easier texts may be found to interpret the harder, and clear ones to enlighten those which are darker and more obscure. *The Word of God is not only a light and a rule to us, but to it self.*

Or, *He multiplyeth my wounds without cause*] is as if *Job* had said, I know the Lord deals not with me as with a guilty person, nor doth he judge me as a malefactor; mine is a probation, not a punishment: God doth only try me, to see what is in my heart, and how I can stand in an evil day. *He multiplieth my wounds without cause*; that is, without the cause which you have so often

חנם *Gratis.*

Vulnere sine causa sunt mala et flagella, quæ non ab aliquod mittuntur peccatum.

* *Sine causa manifesta, et ab homine afflictio preceptibili.* Aquin.

His verbis evidenter exponit, quæ supra occulte dixerit; si venerit ad me, non video. Hoc enim ubig; fere in dictis Jobi *observandum, quod obscure dicta per aliqua consequentia exponuntur.* Aquin.

Hæc à Job *dicta sunt, quod intelligat se non tam flagellari quam probari.*

Animus in Deum præclare affectus, sed tamen affectus doloribus.

objected against me, namely that I am an hypocrite and wicked. I know God looks upon me as a child, or a friend, not as an enemy. Therefore I have no cause to multiply words with God, though God go on *to multiply my wounds without cause.*

To multiply wounds] notes numerous and manifold afflictions; many in number, and many in kind. *Job*'s were deep, deadly wounds, and he had many of them, was all over wound, body and soul were wounds, he was smitten within and without; *as to multiply to pardon*, is to pardon abundantly (*Isa.* 55. 7.) So to multiply wounds, or to multiply to wound, is to wound abundantly.

Here a Question would be resolved, how the justice of God may be acquitted, in laying on and multiplying afflictions *without cause.*

I shall refer the Reader for further light about this point to the third verse of the second Chapter, where those words are opened; *Thou movest me against him, to destroy him without cause*; yet take here three considerations more, by way of answer to the doubt.

First, Whatsoever the Lord wounds and takes from any man, he wounds and takes his own. *He is Lord over all.* Our health and strength are his, our riches are his; *The world is his, and the fulness of it* (Psal. 50.) *If he be hungry he needs not tell us*; he can go to his own store. It is no wrong to dispose what is our own, wheresoever we find it. That rule is as true in revocations, as distributions: *Friend, I do thee no wrong* (Mat. 20. 15.) *Is it not lawfull for me to do what I will with mine own?* though there were no sin in man, yet there were no injustice in God, because he takes nothing from us, but what he gave us, and hath full power to recall and take away.

Secondly, Suppose man could say, that, what he had were his own, that, his riches were his own, that, health and strength of body were his own, yet God may take them away, and do no wrong. It is so among men, *Kings and States* call out their Subjects to war, and in that war their wounds are multiplyed without any cause given by them: they gave no occasion why they should be appointed to such hazards of life and limb, to such hardships of hunger and cold; yet there is no injustice in this. When God casts man into trouble, he calls him out to his service, he hath a war, some noble enterprize and design to send him upon. *To*

you

you it is given to ſuffer for his ſake (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Phil.* 1.29.) he puts it among the ſpeciall priviledges, which ſome Saints are graced with, not only above the world, but above many of the Saints, *To whom it is given* (and that's a royal gift) *only to believe.* Now, if in proſecuting this ſuffering task, whether for Chriſt, or from Chriſt, a beleiver layes out his eſtate, credit liberty, or life, he is ſo far from being wronged, that he is honoured. Thouſands are ſlain on publick imployments, who have given no cauſe to be ſo ſlain. If according to the line of men, this be no injuſtice, much leſs is it injuſtice in God, who is without line, himſelf being the only line and rule to himſelf, and to all beſides himſelf.

Thirdly, I may anſwer it thus, though the Lord *multiply wounds without cauſe*; yet he doth it without wrong to the wounded, becauſe he wounds with an intent to heal, and takes away with a purpoſe to give more; as in the preſent caſe God, made *Job* an amends for all the wounds, whether of his body or goods, good name or ſpirit. Now, though it be a truth in reſpect of man, that we may not break anothers head, and ſay, we will give him a plaiſter, or to take away from a man his poſſeſſion, and ſay we will give it him again, yet God may. Man muſt not be ſo bold with man, becauſe he hath no right to take away and wound, nor is he ſure that he can reſtore and heal; but it is no boldneſs, but a due right in God to do thus, for he as Lord hath power to take away, and ability to reſtore. And he reſtores ſometimes in temporalls, as to *Job*, but alwayes to his people in ſpirituals and eternals. Hence the Apoſtle argueth (2 *Cor.* 4.17.) *Our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us an eternal weight of glory.* Afflictions work glory for us, not in a way of meriting glory, but in a tendency to the receiving of glory, and in preparations for it. *There is no wrong in thoſe loſſes by which we are made gainers: thoſe loſſes being ſent that we may gain, and the ſender of the loſs being able effectually to make us gainers.*

He multiplyeth my wounds without cauſe.

Hence obſerve, Firſt,

Afflictions are no argument that God doth not love us.

As the Lord hath a multitude of mercies in his heart, ſo a multitude of afflictions in his hand; and a multitude of afflictions may conſiſt with a multitude of mercies. At the ſame time when we

are visibly encompast about, and besieged with an army of sorrows and opposers, an army of invisible comforts, and protectours may be encamping round about us: As *Elisha* assured his servant, 2 *King.* 6. 17.

Secondly, (Which I shall but only name, because I have met it heretofore.)

The Lord is not accountable to any creature for his actions.

He multiplyeth my wounds without cause, or *He multiplyeth my wounds without shewing cause.* God is the only Judge, who may give sentence without hearing parties, or shewing cause. It is unrighteous in an earthly Judge to do so; he must not judge a man to any suffering, and not shew reason of his judgement: But the first cause needs not shew second causes. God hath the reason of all things in himself, and therefore we cannot call him to give his reason. Where the will of the Agent may lawfully be all the reason of his actions, there is no reason he should give any account of his actions, but what himself wills.

The next verse is of the same tenour in sense with the former, the difference is only in expression.

Vers. 18. *He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.*

He not only breaks me with a tempest, and multiplies my wounds, but *He will not suffer me to take my breath.* This implies the unintermittedness of afflictions; as if he had said, *I have not only many afflictions, and great afflictions, but continuall afflictions.* The Hebrew is, *He will not give me to draw back my breath*, or *suffer my breath to return*: The words are of the same importance with those of the 7*th* Chapter, ver. 19. *How long wilt thou not depart from me? Nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?* That is, wilt thou not give me so much respite as to *swallow down my spittle*? Here (which is more) he affirms, *He will not give me so much as a breathing time.*

Non dedit mihi retrahere spiritum.

Some interpret this of a bodily distemper or disease: that God had brought a sickness upon him, which did even stop his breath, as if *Job* had been troubled with hardness of breathing, with the *Tissick* (as Physitians call it) or a stopping in the lungs. But we may rather take it figuratively, my sorrows put me out of breath, the Lord doth not only afflict me without giving me any account, but I have unceasant afflictions, which cannot be counted. *No man*

Quidam ad morbum referunt. quasi Job Asthmate laboraſſet. Beda.

can

can tell how often he doth or suffers that which he alwayes doth or suffers. I am so far from seeing a period of my troubles, that I have not so much as any pause or stop. He speaks in that high strain of rhetorick, called *hyperbole*, for in strictness of the letter, not to suffer a man to take his breath, is to kill and quite destroy him: but when he saith, God will not suffer me to breathe, it noteth the continuation of his sorrows, not the expiration of his dayes.

Again not to suffer a man to take his breath, before he hath done such a thing, is a * *Proverb*, for speedy doing. Like that used by some of the Ancients, to do a thing *without one spit*, that is, in as little time as a man may spit. When the *b Italians* would express acting without delay, they say, *Go about this business, and do not fetch a breath till you are here again, go and come with a breath.* That direction given by *Elisha* to his servant *Gehezi*, when he sent him to restore the *Shunammites* son (2 *Kings* 4. 29.) *Take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way, if thou meet any man, salute him not, and if any salute thee, answer him not again*, &c. And that of Christ to his Disciples, when he gave them their Commission to preach the Gospel (*Luk.* 10. 4.) *Salute no man by the way*, are of the same intendment. Christ did not mean that his Disciples should be uncivil (nor *Elisha* his) he did not forbid them to use common courtesies to men, when they went to call men to speciall grace. No, but his meaning is, go speedily about the work, do not stand complementing and talking with, *How do you, and how do you?* by the way: do not entertain the time, or triffle it away with Ceremonies, having an imployment of such infinite concernment put into your hands. So he seems to allude to, and reprove that ill custome of idle servants, who when they are sent forth upon business will yet stand and talk with every one they meet. Now, as not to suffer a man to talk a word while he is upon a service, imports suddain dispatch: So when *Job* saith, *He will not suffer me to take my breath* in these my sufferings, his meaning is, mine are no lazy, dull sufferings, I am forced to be active at them, I cannot stand breathing and cooling my self, I have no leisure, no vacation at all from this passive service; *He will not suffer me to take my breath.*

* *Fortasse proverbium erat, ad significandum facere aliquid indifinenter et absq; ulla vel minima mora aut intermissione. Una salvia.* Hieron. *in ep* ἄπνευς, i.e. *uno spiritu aliquid facere est diligenter facere.* Theoph. *in Charact.*

b *Va presto, et non fietare, q. d. unohalitu egressum et regressum perfice.*

But (or, *for*) *he filleth me with bitterness*, or *with bitternesses.*

I have opened this word before, c. 3. 10. As in Scripture, sweetness implyes all comfort: so bitterness all trouble and sorrow. When God

God complains about the services of his people (*Jer.* 6. 20. *Hos.* 9.) he saith, *Your Sacrifices are not sweet to me*; so the Originall; that is, your Sacrifices are not acceptable to me, or pleasing to me. Sweet things are pleasing things, bitter things are unpleasing. Afflictions are unpleasant to flesh and blood (Heb. 12. 11.) *No affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous.*

Sicut dulcedo omnia jucunda et amica naturæ significat, sic nomine amaritudinis, præsertim in numero multitudinis, gravissimæ quæq; afflictiones intelliguntur. Bold. *Victimæ non dulcuerunt.* Hos. 9. 4.

Bitterness is put for the extreamest affliction, and in the plurall (as here) for all afflictions; *Surely the bitterness of death is past*, saith *Agag* (1 Sam. 15. 32.) that is, I have escaped bitter death at this time; the souldier spared me in the heat of the battell, surely then a Prophet will not slay me in cold blood. *To be filled with bitterness* notes abundance of afflictions. As to be *filled with the Spirit, to be filled with the fulness of Christ*, &c. note the plentifull receiving of the Spirit, and of the grace of Christ. To taste of a bitter cup, to sip a little of it, is unpleasant, but to drink large draughts, to be fild with bitterness, who can abide? When Christ was come to *Golgotha*, *They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall*; but (though he drank up that cup of his fathers wrath to the very bottom, though he drank up all the gall and wormwood of sin, for the salvation of men, yet) when he had tasted thereof, *He would not drink.* (Mat. 27. 34.) If it be grievous to taste but a little of a bitter cup, then judge how greivous *Job*'s sufferings were, who was filled with bitterness; he had his belly full of trouble, his belly full of *Gall and Wormwood*, his stomack could hold no more, bitterness was both his meat and drink.

Note, First, *Afflictions may come unceassantly.*

Not so much as a breathing time between; then while thou art assaulted prepare for fresh assaults.

Observe, Secondly, *The Lord sometimes mixes a very bitter cup for his own people.*

Yea, they have not only a bitter cup, but bitterness is their cup; and they have not only a taste of it, but are filled with it. The Psalmist shews us a bitter cup, which is the proper portion of wicked men; *There is a cup in the hand of the Lord, and it is full of mixture, the wine is red, and the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them* (Ps. 75. 8.) The Lord hath a cup of red wine, that is, a cup filled with wrath, fury and indignation. Wicked men (how much soever their stomacks loath it, and turn against it) shall drink it up to the bottom, or he will

pou

pour it down their throats, whether they will or no. *They ſhall be filled with bitterneſs* after all their ſweet morſels and pleaſant draughts. The Saints are filled with bitterneſs from God, but not with the wrath of God; many ſorrows may be mingled in their cup, but everlaſting love is ever mingled in it. *Saints never drink pure wrath, as wicked men never taſte pure love.*

To conclude we may obſerve here a *Climax*, or *gradation* of four ſteps.

Firſt (*Verſ.* 14.) *Job* acknowledged that he was unable to anſwer the Lord.

And ſecondly, He profeſſeth that if he could, he would not, no, he would humble himſelf (*verſ.* 15.

Thirdly, If in mercy God ſhould anſwer his petition, yet he would not be confident at all (in regard of himſelf) that God had heard *him*, or hearkned unto *his* voice.

Laſtly, He acknowledged that God might go on to afflict him ſtill; for ſome read this text in the *future tenſe*, *He will multiply my wounds, and afflict me without cauſe*; *He will fill me with bitterneſs*. A godly man reckons up his afflictions as well as his comforts to the praiſe and honour of God. And the more God afflicts him, the more he abaſes himſelf, though he doth not think the worſe of himſelf, becauſe God doth afflict him.

JOB,

JOB, Chap. 9. Vers. 19, 20, 21.

If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong; and if of judgement, who shall set me a time to plead?
If I justifie my self, mine own mouth shall condemn me; If I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.
Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my own soul, I would despise my life.

JOB goeth on to lay himself yet lower before God: and having in the three former verses proved, that weak man is not able to contend with the Almighty; he giveth an additional proof in this 19*th* verse, from the considerations of a two-fold adjunct in God. First, his *strength*. And secondly, his *justice*. From both he concludeth, according to the former argument given upon the whole matter in the 10*th* verse, seeing God is so strong and just, *Surely, if I justifie my self my own mouth shall condemn me; and if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.*

If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong.

There are two wayes, whereby a man makes his part good against another man.

First, By the strength of his arm, and dint of his sword.

Secondly, By the equity of his cause, and the goodness of his conscience. *Job* declareth his inability to deal with God in either, *If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong*, &c.

M. *Broughton* translates thus, *As for force he is valiant*; if I think to carry it by force with God, he is a God of valour, or as *Moses* in his Song (Exod. 15. 3.) describeth him, *The Lord is a man of war*, I cannot deal with him upon that point.

In originali indifferens est, nam tantum habetur, si ad potentiam; ut supleri possi, venero, aut respexero, vel aliquid simile.

The Original speaks only thus much, *If of strength, he strong*; we supply the word [speak] if men talk of strength, or boast of strength, or shew forth their strength (we may supply it with any of those words) *Lo, he is strong.* as it is usual with us when we would set a man up, in the perfection of any quality, we say, What do you speak of knowledge, why, *There's a learned man!* What do ye speak of riches, *why, there's a rich man!* &c. Such an emphasis is carried in this expression, *If I speak of strength*, why, *here's one that is strong indeed!*

There

There are five words in the Hebrew which signifie strength. The first notes strength in general: The second, strength to endure labour: The third, efficacy: The fourth, vigour: the fifth, which is that of the text, superiority of strength, or prevailing strength. It is one thing to be strong, and another thing to prevail. The Lord is not only *strong*, *but strongest*; he hath a strength above all strength, he is strong overcomingly, strong prevailingly. Christ in the Gospel speaks of a *strong man* (he means the devil) that kept the house; but he was not strong *prevailingly*, for there came a *stronger then he*, that spoyl'd him, and took away all his armour from him, wherein he trusted (*Luk.* 11. 22.) but when the holy Ghost saith, That the Lord is strong, the meaning is, that he is stronger then all: and so generally the positive is expounded by the superlative, *If we speak of strength, lo, he is strong*, that is, he is most strong. Thus we find the word used, 2 Sam. 22. 18. *He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me, for they were too strong for me*: they were prevailingly strong for me, and therefore unless I had found a supply of help, unless some auxillaries had come from heaven to take my part, they had been too hard for me, I had been overmatcht, they were prevailingly strong, or too strong for me. We have the word in the same sense (*Gen.* 25. 23.) in that resolution which the unerring Oracle of heaven gave *Rebekah* enquiring about the children striving in her womb, the Lord answereth thus, *Two Nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people*; and then addeth, *The one people shall be stronger then the other people*; it is this word, the one people shall be prevailingly strong, and shall overcome the other; both people shall be strong, mighty and potent, but there is one of them shall have the rule, and shall conquer and subdue the other. *If I speak of strength, he is strong.* The sum is, *If the Question be about strength and power, then the Lord carries the day and the honour, he is most powerfull, he is strong above all.* Hence observe, That

אמץ *Prevalens, vincens, invicto quodam & obstinato animo præditus, dici solet de eo qui viribus superior est.* כח *Vis generaliter,* אמץ *connotat proportionem ad efficientiam, vel contentionem virium.* חזק *Est durabilitas in agente et actione.* גבורה *Efficacium* חיל *Vigorem significat.* Coc.

Regnum regno prævalebit, sc. populus præpotens populo robustior.

God is of infinite and insuperable strength.

He hath strength: many have malice and wickedness, boldness and presumption enough to oppose, but none have power enough to overcome him. He hath force which none can subdue; and he hath authority which none ought to resist. These two must concur wheresoever there is full determining power. A man may have authority or right to do a thing, and yet have no strength

to execute and effect it. And many have ſtrength to do thoſe things (as to oppreſs a man, to take his goods or his life from him) for which they have no authority: both meet in the Lord, therefore he is the *Soveraign Lord*; he hath authority to do as much as he can, and he hath ſtrength to do as much as he will. Some men would make ſtrange work in the world, if they had ſtrength ſutable to their authority: and others would make a good world by their works, if they had authority ſutable to their ſtrength: both theſe meet in God; who can contend with him? *If we ſpeak of ſtrength, loe, he is ſtrong!*

There are three things wherein this inſuperableneſs of the ſtrength of God appears.

1. He hath ſtrength to do whatſoever he will, *There is nothing not fecible or too hard for him.*

2. He hath ſtrength to do what he willeth not; the Lord is able to do more then ever he will do; he could preſently take vengeance upon all the wicked, but he will not; he is patient and good toward them, who look not at all towards repentance, to which his goodneſs and patience lead them, *Rom.* 2. 5.

3. He is ſtrong that he can do whatſoever imports ſtrength, becauſe he only doth what he will do. *To do that which is not our will to do, is a note of diſability.* It argues a want of power to be forced to do a thing, as well as not to be able to do it. *He that doth what he would not, is not able to do what he would.* God is therefore able to do whatſoever he wills, becauſe he never did nor can be drawn to do any thing againſt his will. It follows then, that the Lord is ſo ſtrong that he can do whatſoever names him ſtrong; and only cannot do thoſe things, which if he did, he muſt be weak, as was further ſhewed at the fourth verſe of this Chapter.

Secondly, Hence it appears, that

No creature is able to grapple with God.

He is ſtrongeſt. The Apoſtle gives that admonition (1 *Cor.* 10. 22.) *Do we provoke the Lord to jealouſie? Are we ſtronger then he?* Surely, except man thought he were able to match God, he would not be ſo fool-hardy, ſo vain, to throw down the Gauntlet, or enter the liſts with God: *The weakneſs of God is ſtronger then men* (1 Cor. 1. 25.) not that there is any weakneſs in God, but take that which men conceive to be weakeſt or weakneſs in him, that's ſtronger then man. Or, *The weakneſs of God*, that is, the weakeſt

weakest instruments which God uses are stronger, *scil.* in their effects, then the strongest which men use. God can do more with ten men, then man can do with an hundred. The most stammering tongue and flattest language shall perswade more, if God speak with it, then the most fluent tongue and sparkling Oratory spoken meerly by man: *If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong!*

And if of judgment, Who shall set me a time to plead?

If I cannot by force and power, may I not by subtilty and wit, by reason and argument, by eloquence and rhetorick prevail against him? No, *If of judgement,, Who shall set me a time to plead?* As I cannot deal with God at the sword, or in the field; so neither can I deal with him at the bar, or at the judgement seat.

There are two words in the Hebrew which are used for judging. The first is, *Dan*, the name of one of the *twelve Patriarks*, and from him of a Tribe in *Israel*; *Dan shall judge his people* (Gen. 49. 16.) And that word (in strictness) signifies to give doom or sentence in a cause. The other word is that in the Text, *Shaphat*, which signifies more especially the doing of right, or the righting of a man in any controversie. The Greek word takes in both. Now, while *Job* saith, *If of Judgement*, or *if we speak of Judgement*, the question is what judgement doth he mean?

משפט *Judicium, jus, ratio.*

Κρίνω.

Judgement is taken three wayes.

First, For the rule of judging, or for the Law whereby we judge. It is said (1 *Sam.* 10. 25.) that *Samuel* (after he had anointed *Saul* for King) *told the people the manner of the Kingdome, and wrote it in a book. This manner of the Kingdome* was not the common practise and custome of the Kingdome, but (it is the word of the text) the *judgements of the Kingdome*, that is, those rules and laws by which the Kingdom ought to be governed and judged.

Secondly, Judgement is put for an ability or fitness to judge, to discern and weigh things, to scan a cause, and try out the uttermost truth of every circumstance: judgement is the ability of the person judging. And

Thirdly, Judgement is taken for the sentence given upon the person judged, after the evidence of his cause is heard and taken. Judgement, in this third sense is the result of the former two. For when by judgement, as it is the rule of judging, and an ability to judge, the Judge hath wrought and tryed out what the merit of a

mans cause, and the truth of a business in controversie is, then the issue of both is, *Judgement in this third sense*, that is, an act which is passed, or a sentence pronounced upon the person that standeth in, or the cause which is brought to judgement.

So, *If of judgement*, is, If I bring forth my cause to be tryed by the abilities of the Judge, and by the rule of the Law, this will be no releif to me, I shall be in as ill a case, as if I were to deal with God by plain strength.

There is an opinion that takes in a fourth sense about this word *judgement*, as if judgement were not a *forensicall, or a judicial term* in this text, but signified only afflictions or punishments upon a people or person. These are called the judgements of God, *Rom.* 11.33. *How unsearchable are his judgements, and his wayes past finding out?* that is, the several acts which he passes upon men, his providences and outward dispensations (for he speaks of casting off of the Jews, and laying them aside, for so long a time, which is one of the greatest, if not the greatest judgement which God ever burdened his own Covenant people with) *These* (saith he) *are past finding out.* And then, *If I come to speak of judgement*, is, If I speak with God about his judgements shewed in those terrible providential acts upon others or upon my self, and cite him to answer for what he hath done towards me or them; who is able to plead? who will undertake this cause against the Lord?

Judicium sumitur hoc loco pro divinis operibus, humanum captum excedentibus, non pro forensi et judiciali actu. Olymp.

Who shall set me a time to plead?

It is but one word which we translate, [*To set a time to plead*] but the sense is very large and various, it signifies to appoint, constitute or prescribe either time, place or persons, any or all the circumstantials of action. It is here translated by divers in reference to the time, And by some in reference to the place. And because the people of God are to meet at appointed times and places for solemn and publick worship, therefore this word signifies the Church or the Congregation, which is alwayes to meet by publick appointment at such a time, or in such a place, least there should be scatterings and confusions amongst those who should be most unanimous and harmonious. It is taken also for any meeting, *Psal.* 48. 4. *Lo the Kings were assembled or gathered together*, And *Amos* 3. 3, *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* That is, except they be friends, *They who have not one heart, seldome have one way.* Or, *except they be agreed*, that is, upon time or place; two

יעד

In suo Kal condicere, convenire et tempus constituere proprie significat. In hiphil (sicut hic) convenire facere

עד

Conventus status horis et locum aggregari solitus. Cætu, Collegium, Ecclesia congregatio.

two men cannot converse or have any business one with another, unless they consent and appoint *where and when*; if one be for this time and place, and the other for that, they can never walk together. It is put for a set time, 2 *Sam.* 24. 15. the Lord having sent the pestilence upon *Jerusalem* for the sin of David in numbering the people, it is said, the pestilence destroyed *from the morning even to the time appointed*; the Lord had set the pestilence a time, it wrought to that time, and no longer.

Further, The word is applyed to any Covenant, pact, or mutuall agreement: Hence the Tabernacle is indifferently called, *The Tabernacle of the testimony*, or, *The Tabernacle of the Congregation*, because there God confirmed and setled his Covenant, and made an agreement with his people, and his people resorted to the Tabernacle to have the Articles of that Covenant made good to them by his own appointment. Hence (I say) it was called, *The Tabernacle of witness*, *The Tabernacle of the Testament*, or, *The Tabernacle of the Covenant*. Upon this ground also all the solemn feasts of the Jews were expresst by this general word, they being all observed at set times and places. And for this reason the word is used for the *grave*. So in the 30*th* of this book of *Job*, verse 23. which we translate thus, *The house appointed for all living*; there is a time when, and a place appointed where all that live shall be laid down when they dye, or where their bodies shall be housed after they are dissolved; therefore it is called, *The house of appointment*, the house which the Lord hath setled both for time and place where it shall be made, and when we shall be carried to it. No man goes to his grave by accident; the Lord hath appointed man his place, and bounded his habitation, when he is dead, as well as while he lived.

Obel-Mogned. Tabernaculum testimonij, i. e. publicæ fidei in Deum et homines contractæ, &c. Pined.

Beth-Mogned.

Again, For a clearer understanding of this, it may have an allusion to that course which is observed in *Courts of Justice*, where, when either *Plaintiff* or *defendant* wants counsell to plead for him, the *Court assigns counsell*; and it is observed by the learned, that among the *Romans*, the *Pretor* would say, *What, is there none to plead for him? I will appoint one to take his cause into consideration, and to plead for him.* It is ordinary with our Judges to appoint counsell, as also time and place, when and where to hear causes. The words may have an allusion to this course of Judges: *If I come to Judgement*, who will assign me counsell? where shall I get any one to plead this cause, and to stand up for me against the Lord?

Prætor dicere solebat, Si advocatum non habet, ego dabo.

There

Nemo audet pro me teſtimonium dicere. Vulg.

There is yet another underſtanding of the word, as having reference to the teſtimony or witneſs which is brought in. So the Vulgar reads it. No man will be ſo bold as to give in evidence for me, or be a witneſs on my behalf.

Take all theſe ſenſes, *If I come to judgement, who,* &c. *I ſhall get none to give in evidence for me, none to plead for me, I ſhall get none to aſſign counſel for me, none to appoint time and place for a hearing*; Therefore I may as well contend with God by ſtrength, as by judgement. The ſum of all is, *Job* confeſſes, in caſe he had a mind to go this way, he ſhould not find any in the world to aſſiſt or help him in it.

We have had divers paſſages of like nature with this, wherein *Job* declared his utter inability to plead with God; therefore I ſhall but briefly note one thing from it.

There is no ſtanding before God in judgement by the help of any creature.

Who ſhall ſet me a time to plead? Or, who ſhall be my pleader? One man cannot do it for another; all the Angels in heaven are not able to do it for any man. If man enter into judgement with God, men and Angels cannot help him. As the Apoſtle ſpeaks in another caſe about the want of love, *If I ſpeak with the tongue of men and Angels, and have not charity, it profits me nothing*: So, if we ſhould ſpeak for our ſelves, or others for us, with the tongues of men, that is, with the tongues of the moſt excellent Oratours or pleaders, yea, with the tongues of Angels, with tongues that exceed all that men can ſpeak, yet in judgement with God theſe will be but *ſounding braſs, and tinkling Cymbals.*

Job goes on yet a ſtep further. *If I* ſhould undertake to manage my cauſe my ſelf (ſome Clients will deſire their counſell to ſtand by, and they will argue their own cauſe) why, ſaith *Job*, *If I* ſhould do ſo, if *I* ſhould be my own Advocate, or Atturney, and appear my ſelf in my own cauſe, it would be all one, *If I juſtifie my ſelf, my own mouth ſhall condemn me*, I ſhall be as bad, if not worſe then before. I can get none to plead for me, and if I plead for my ſelf, *I* am ſure to be caſt, *I* cannot mend my ſelf by ſpeaking in my own cauſe; that's the meaning of this 20*th* verſe, which is but a continuation, with a further illuſtration, of what he had ſpoken before, therefore I ſhall but touch upon it.

Verſe

Verſe 20. *If I juſtifie my ſelf.*

That is, if witneſs fail, and counſel fail, if all help and ſuccours fail me, and then *I* reſolve to go to work with my own ſtrength and wit, if *I* go about to make or declare my ſelf juſt before God (for ſo the word is to be underſtood, as in the doctrine of juſtification) What ſhall *I* gain? the profit will not countervail the charge, or pay for the expence of one breath; For

Mine own mouth ſhall condemn me.

My tongue would cut my own throat; the ſentence or words which *I* ſhould bring forth to plead my cauſe before God, would be found againſt me; the Lord would turn all my arguments back upon me, and wound me with mine own weapons. *I* ſhould go out condemned, and my plea would be turned into ſin. *I* ſhall certainly ſpoyl my cauſe, if I handle it. As, if I ſhould put it into the hands of Angels or men, they could make nothing of it, ſo neither can I make any thing of it, if I manage it my ſelf.

Os meum, i.e. meum teſtimonium, mea oratio. Exibo ex hujuſmodi judicio condemnatus, et oratio mea fiet in peccatum.

There are three things which evince that if man undertake the matter with God, he ſhall be condemned by his own mouth.

Firſt, Man is unſufficient. How can he, who is ignorant, weak and unrighteous, plead his cauſe with God, who is infinite in wiſdome, righteouſneſs and holineſs? and therefore mans own mouth will condemn him, his words will ſpeak him guilty, while he plead, *Not guilty.*

Secondly, He that juſtifies himſelf muſt appear in his own commendation, he muſt bring forth all his good works, and ſhew the Lord how he hath faſted, prayed, and mourned, how humble, how liberal he hath been, what alms he hath given, he muſt (as it were) paint and adorn himſelf in all his excellencies, and ſtand before the Lord in this array. Now mans own mouth muſt condemn him, if he do thus. The Heathen could ſay by the light of nature, *That a mans praiſes are ſullied by paſſing thorow his own lips. To ſound our own praiſe, ſounds our own ſhame.* If a man have never ſo much worth in him, he diſhonours himſelf by being the trumpet of it.

Ut laus ſic teſtimonium proprio ſordeſcit in ore.

Thirdly, A mans own teſtimony is not legal in his own cauſe. *The ſame perſon muſt not be a witneſs and a party.* He that juſtifies himſelf, condems himſelf, for his very juſtification is an accuſation. If a mans own witneſs may be taken, who ſhall be condemned?

ed? Who will not acquit himself? The witness of our own hearts is much (1 *Joh.* 3. 21.) but not enough, *If our own hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.* But the reason of this confidence is not in the bare, single witness of our own hearts, but in the co-wit nes of God with our hearts. Conscience is therefore a thousand witnesses, because God who is more then a thousand consciences, joyns with conscience both in accusing and in acquitting. The Pharisees said unto Christ, *Thou bearest record of thy self, thy record is not true* (Joh. 8. 13, 16.) They spake upon a legall ground or maxime; Christ answereth, *Though I bear record of my self, yet my record is true.* Christ doth not deny the rule, but shews that he was above it, and therefore adds, *It is said in your Law, that the testimony of two men is true, I am not alone, for the Father is with me:* As if he had said, I alone bear not witness of my self, *I have another, even the Father that sent me, he beareth witness of me,* therefore mine is not a single testimony; in that case indeed I were to be reproved, and my witness were insufficient, *My own mouth would condemn me,* if there were no mouth to testifie for me, but only mine; If I were but as an ordinary man, I might be kept to the ordinary rule. *God only is a sufficient witness to himself.*

Hominis innocentia duobus testibus constare debet 1 Deo 2 Conscientia Ergo si tibi videris habere bonum conscientiæ testimonium, bene quidem, sed divinum adhuc de tua innocentia exp&dendum est.

Mine own mouth shall condemn me. But of what? Surely of folly (2 Cor. 12. 11.) *I became a fool in glorying,* saith *Paul* to his *Corinthians*; but I am not a fool of my own making, *ye have compelled me, for* I *ought to have been commended of you.* That is, ye ought to have given a testimony of me; if ye had been just to me, I had been condemn'd in justifying my self. Then it is a duty to witness for our selves, when others neglect that duty.

הרשיע *Proprie sonat impij ficare, ut* פ֗ צ֗ *justifica. re.* Merc. *In forma Hiphil non effectionem denotat, sed declarationem.*

The Original word which we translate *condemn*, is directly opposite to that which we translate *justifie*; and some render it by a new-coyn'd word in Latine, which we cannot put litterally into English, but by coyning a word for it, thus; *If I justifie my self, my own mouth would ungodlifie me, or declare me to be ungodly.*

Here two Questions arise, the one is, why may not *Job* justifie himself? The Lord had justified him, the Lord said that he was a perfect man (that's the next expression, *If I say I am perfect it shall prove me perverse.*) The Lord had said of *Job*, Chap. 1. *That he was perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evill*; why may not *Job* say as much of himself, as the Lord had done?

Solomon

Solomon reſolves this query (Prov. 27. 2.) *Let another man praiſe thee, and not thine own mouth, a ſtranger, and not thine own lips.* Man muſt not ſpeak the evil he knows by others, unleſs called, nor the good he knows by himſelf. To ſpeak good of our ſelves with our own mouths, is much like doing good by other mens hands. We muſt not act things praiſe-worthy by *proxie*, but it is beſt to be praiſed by *proxie* for our good acts. Now as man may not praiſe himſelf, though other men may praiſe him: So he muſt not praiſe himſelf though God praiſeth him. *Not he that commendeth himſelf is approved, but he whom the* Lord *commendeth*, 2 *Cor.* 10. 18.

Secondly, Why doth *Job* ſay here, I will not juſtifie my ſelf, I will not ſay I am perfect? Whereas in other places he juſtifies himſelf, and ſaith that he was perfect; if you read the 29*th* and 30*th* Chapters of this book, you ſhall find them to be but a continued juſtification of himſelf, or a *manifeſt of his own innocency*. There he proclaims how holy he had been, and how righteous in all his wayes, that he had put on judgement as a robe, and juſtice as a diadem, that he had delivered the oppreſſed, and diſtributed of his ſulneſs to the neceſſities of the poor. Thoſe two Chapters being a profeſſed Catalogue of his good deeds, why is he ſo ſhie and modeſt here?

I anſwer, In this and the like expreſſions, while *Job* ſaith, he will not juſtifie himſelf, or ſay, he is perfect, he declines the plea of perſonal righteouſneſs or perfection in the ſight of God, as hath frequently appeared in this argument. But in thoſe Chapters and in other places where he is upon his defence, he ſpeaks only in reference to the charge of his friends; As if he had ſaid, *Ye accuſe me for an hypocrite, and cenſure me deeply, I can juſtifie my ſelf, and plead my innocency with you, though I have not a word to ſay for my ſelf before the* Lord; *I will berr any thing at his hands, let him ſay of me, and do with me what he pleaſeth, I will take ſhame to my ſelf, and give him glory; but as for you my friends, I will juſtifie my ſelf in your ſight, I am not the man ye take me for.*

Pium ſenſus pulchrè expreſſus in hac Jobi *diſputatione, nunc peccatum ſuum dimiſſè confitentis, nunc juſtitiam ſuam acerrime defendentis.* Merl.

Theſe ſpeakings are not croſs to each other, but helps us to underſtand of *Jobs* ſenſe in this argument. He ſtands much upon his integrity, but it is to his friends; he humbles himſelf in the ſight of his own vileneſs, but it is to God. *Paul* (*Rom.* 7. 24.) bewails his ſinfulneſs, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of ſin and of death! I find a law in my members, rebelling*

belling against the law of my mind: Yet when he answers false Apostles about his personal carriage, and the discharge of his Apostleship, then he saith, *I know nothing by my self* (1 Cor 4. 4.) I am charged thus and thus, I am slandered so and so, but my conscience acquits me, *I know nothing by my self*; the sinfulness of his nature made him groan and sigh out, *O wretched man that I am*; The sincerity of his heart made him boast and sing out like *a happy man, as sorrowful, but alwayes rejoycing. A man may be conscious of his own natural corruption, and yet confident of his own practical integrity.*

If I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.

רשע & צרק *ad facta* חם & עקש *ad animum referuntur.*

These words in strictness of sense refer to the inward purpose of his heart, or bent of his mind, as the former did to the outward way of his life, *If I say I am perfect*, that is, if I say there is no meditated obliquity in my heart, no intended goings astray, or wandrings, no close hypocrisie or falsness there; if I should say, I am perfect in the bent and purposes of my heart, yet this is not such as I dare appear before God in. As if I justifie my self by the actings and puttings forth of my life, *My mouth will condemn me*. So if I say I am perfect in the thinkings and secret motions of my spirit, *it will prove me perverse.*

חם *Qui certo est proposito* עקש *qui vago & diverso, qui se dividit & distorquet in duas vias.* Coc. *In Hebræo simplex est, perversicavit me.*

The word which we translate (*perverse*) signifies to wander as a man uncertain of his way (*Prov.* 28. 18.) *Whoso walketh uprightly* (having the frame of his inward man right) *he shall be saved but he that is perverse in his wayes*) having a wandring vagrant mind, going sometime this way, and sometime that, holding somewhat of this, and somewhat of that, but nothing to purpose or steadily of any thing, this man) *shall fall at once; a man of an uncertain spirit, shall have a certain downfall.* But was *Job* thus perverse? No, *Job* was perfect, and not perverse: yet a boast of his perfection had been a proof of his perverseness. *Nothing discovers an evil heart more then a profession of its own goodness.*

It shall prove me perverse.

Perversus evadam.

What shall prove me perverse? Some refer it to the former clause, *My mouth* (or the speaking of those words: *I am perfect*) *shall prove me perverse.* Others refer it to God, *God will prove me perverse*, if I justifie my self. The Seventy leave it without restriction

striction to any antecedent, *If I say I am perfect, I shall go away perverse*, or I shall appear perverse.

Observe hence that famous Gospel-doctrine, *No man can be justified before God by the works of the law.* It is as noble a proof of *free justification* in the old Testament, as any in the new. The Saints have been acquainted with this truth from the beginning, That man is nothing in himself, and that free grace doth all. The doctine of *free grace* is no new doctrine: the doctrine of *free will* is. (Prov.20.9.) *Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?* And that he must say, who justifies himself before God. Every legal *Justiciary* takes up this language, *I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin.* It is a task too hard for men, yea, for all the Angels in Heaven to make one heart clean: only Jesus Christ is able to fetch out the filth and rubbish that lodgeth in, and pollutes our spirits. *To be a heart-cleanser is the peculiar work and honour of Christ.* A man that knows himself and sees his face in the glass of the word (which flatters no man) will never say, *I am clean*: nor will he say, I can cleanse my self. How many spots and blots, how many defects and deformities will that glass represent unto him, which he is not able to heal or fetch out? Every mans face will blush, who sees his heart or his life in that glass, unless he, *Who beholding himself goeth his way, and straight way forgetteth what manner of man he was* (Jam 1.24.)

Nobilis locus clarissimè ostendens neminem ex lege justificari. Coc.

Quot tenebræ, quot nubes, quot maculæ? quem non pudebit, si fidem suam et innocentiam ad illustre illud legis speculum contempletur. Coc.

Secondly, Observe, *Job* had received testimony from God. He could produce *Letters testimonial, subscribed by the hand of heaven, that he was a just and a perfect man, one that feared God and eschewed evil.* Yet this *Job* (let God speak as well as he will of him) will not speak well of himself to God: Let God report him perfect to men, he will not report himself perfect before God. Though *Job* had a free & a full certificate of his innocency (not one bought begged, or got with flattery) yet he forbears in this case to bring it forth, and read it to his friends. *They who have most real worth and holiness in them, are least in their own eyes, and lowest in their own thoughts: they of whom God gives the fairest testimony, give the meanest of themselves*; he cares not much to appear to be, what God assures him, he is. God was positive (*without Ifs or Ands*) in his opinion of him, *Thou art perfect*, but he puts it into a supposition, and i concludes with an *if*, *If I were perfect*, &c.

In the 21.verse *Job* carries on the same business, and bewrayes a more humble and self-denying frame of mind then before.

Though I *were perfect, yet, &c.*

There is a contention among interpreters, to which part of the Chapter this 21. verſe belongs, whether to that which went before, or to that which follows after. I ſhall open it firſt, as the ſenſe of it may be connected with the matter preceeding.

Verſe 21. *Though* I *were perfect, yet would* I *not know my own ſoul;* I *would deſpiſe my life.*

Though I *were perfect.*

Obſerve the gradation. He had ſaid before, If I plead with God, and juſtifie my ſelf, I ſhall be condemned and proved perverſe. But put my caſe at the beſt, that I juſtifying my ſelf, the Lord ſhould accept my juſtification, and ſhould concur with my vote, that I am perfect, yet I could take no joy in this: If the Lord ſhould condeſcend to know me under that notion, I would not adventure to know my own ſoul under the notion of my perfections. The thing is an abhorring to me,

I would not know my ſoul.

Why not? There are two ſenſes given: firſt, thus, *If* I *were perfect*, that is, if upon debate and pleading with God I ſhould come off perfect in my own judgement, certainly then I did not know my own ſoul. That's one ſenſe, and ſo it falls in well with the former words, *If* I *ſhould juſtifie my ſelf, my mouth would prove me perverſe.* And ſo the point that I ſhall note from it, is,

That ignorance of our ſelves is the cauſe of proud and high thoughts of our ſelves.

He that knows himſelf, muſt know himſelf to be imperfect, ſeeing our greateſt perfection in this life, is, to know our own imperfections. When we ſee any ſtanding upon their own bottoms, and crying up themſelves, poor ſouls, how are they benighted! How little do they know of their own hearts or lives! How little do they know of God! they are in darkneſs, therefore they ſee not their own ſpots. If a man, whoſe face is foul or deformed ſhould boaſt of his beauty, would you not ſay, this man knows not his own face? Or ſurely, he hath not looked in a glaſs to day; May we not much rather ſay to him who juſtifies himſelf, and ſaith he is perfect? Sure you never ſaw your face in the glaſs, in that pure Chryſtal glaſs of the Word. He that is in Goſpel-light

ſees

sees himself; and as light encreaseth, so doth his sight of himself. And the more he sees himself, the more evil he sees in himself. In a cloudy day we think the air is clear, but the shining of the Sun, shews us millions of motes in the air: If a man see no motes in his life (some see not beams there) it is because he walks in darkness, and hath not the light. *He doth not know his own soul.* That's a usefull interpretation of the words, and the first sense.

Talem de me cogitationem non admittam, sed omnino contemnam, & de mente meâ penitus excutiam. Quantum vis, bene, rectèq; vixerim, hoc penitus despiciam. Bold. *Admirabili & omni exceptione dignissimâ doctrinâ, ac si esset ex purissimis evangeliis fontibus hausta E cœlo descendit, Nosce teipsum. Noverim me, noverim te.* August.

Secondly, *If I were perfect*; If it should be told me I were perfect, I would not know my own soul; that is, I would not take notice of my self, as perfect, I would be a stranger to my self under that title, I would shake the thoughts of such a perfection out of my mind, as much as I would shake the thoughts of sinfull corruption out of my mind. It is as dangerous to lodge or nourish thoughts of our own perfection, as to lodge thoughts of the most sinful corruptions. *A holy heart loves good thoughts, but it loves not thoughts of its own goodness.*

So then, *I would not know my own soul*] imports not affected ignorance, but elected knowledge. *Job* was no stranger to his own soul, he had studied himself, and was well verst in his own bosom. *Self-knowledge is a duty. And self-knowledge may be a sin.* Christians should read themselves more then books, and yet they may pore too much upon themselves. Heathens gave us this lesson, and they say it came from heaven, *know thy self. Augustine* is quick upon it; *Lord, I know* ME, *and I know* THEE. To know God and our selves is the sum of all knowledge. God doth not know him, who knows not himself. There is a double knowledge of our selves.

First, Of *sinfull self*, or of our sins and failings.

Secondly, Of *renewed self*, or our vertues and graces. Not to know how frail we are, how sinfull we are, to what temptations and corruptions we are most subject, is a sinfull and corrupt ignorance. To know our imperfections, is a part of our perfection.

Talis ignorans a Deo ignoratur.

Secondly, Not to know our graces and vertues, what the work of the Spirit, and the nature within us is, this also is a sinful ignorance. *It is no honour to be what we do not know our selves to be; it is to be in the state of a beast, not to reflect upon our own estate.* The new creature is light, and carries a light for its own discovery. The reproveable knowledge of our own souls is not *the knowledge of intuition*, whereby we apprehend what we are, but

Non noscere animam, phrasis est Hebræa, quæ tantum rei despectum præ se fert, ut illam jetiam respicere aut aliquo modo noscere quis renuat.

but the *knowledge of ostentation*, whereby we are proud of, or trust upon what we are. We have an ordinary saying amongst us, which reacheth this sense fully, Such a woman is beautiful, and *she knows it*; such a one is a proper man, *and he knows it*; Such a one hath many good, a very fine wit, *and he knows it*; that is, such persons pride and lift themselves up in their perfections. You shall haye a soul that will know it self into I know not how much pride; many stand reflecting upon their own perfections, either external, how proper, strong and beautiful they are; or internal, how witty and eloquent they are, what excellent parts and gifts, what a nimble tongue, what sound judgments they have, till they lose Christ in this croud of themselves. This is a dangerous knowledge, a knowledge worse then ignorance. *Better be without knowledge then know our knowledge thus.* As to reflect upon sin, to know our selves in our unbeleif, vanity and passions, *&c.* humble us: And a soul in confessing of sin before God, looks long upon his dark part, upon his wants and failings, for this end, that he may be humbled: so to reflect upon our good deeds or graces, to know our selves in those adornings of love, patience, humility, faith, *&c.* hazzards us upon pride; and some stand gazing so long upon these excellencies, that they are lifted up, and become very proud.

Thus all men who are proud in spirituals, *Know their own souls.* So *Job would not know his own soul.*

Hence observe, that

A gracious heart rejoyceth in nothing but in the righteousness of Christ alone.

He will not know his soul in his own perfections. A godly man would have God know him in the worst, but he will not know himself in the best. He would not have a sin hid from God, but he would hide all his goodness from himself. He will know every good thing before he doth it, but when 'tis done he cares not to know it any more. So the Apostle (Phil. 3.8,9.) *I account all things but losse for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law,* &c. *Paul* the *Apostle* would not know *Paul* the Pharisee. Legal righteousness was loss to him, when he had found Christ: Legal righteousness was dung to him, when he had a sight of righteousness by Christ.

The

The Pharisee (*Luk.* 18.) had all upon account, and he hoped to make good gain upon his accounts: he knew how many alms he had given, how well he paid his tithes, and how often he had fasted. He made a stock of those things, and put them among his treasures, which *Paul* made his loss, and put among the dung. He that thus knows his own soul, hath no true knowledge of Jesus Christ.

So much of this 21 verse, as it is a supposition, and hath connexion with the words fore-going. As it refers to what follows.

The words are rendred in the form of a position, *I am perfect, I know not my soul, I despise my life.* And so divers interpretations are given of it.

First thus, *I am perfect, &c.* that is, my heart is u prigh t, and I have ever prized and valued mine own integrity at such a rate that in comparison thereof, I have not at all regarded, or prized my own life or soul, that is, the greatest comforts and sweetest enjoyments of my life. *My life is but a trifle to my conscience.* And so the meaning is, like that (*Deut.* 33. 9.) where the word *know*, is used in this sense, concerning *Levi, Who said to his father and mother I have not seen him, neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor know his own Children. Levi* sleighted all relations, when they stood in competition with the discharge of that duty, which the Lord called him to, he knew neither father, nor mother nor brother, nor child, one nor other, he had no regard at all to them, so he might do the will of God. This was the commendation of *Levi*, and the priviledge of the *Priest*-hood was assigned to that Tribe upon this service. Grace will not hearken to the cry of nature, when it hears the call of God. *Job* is conceived to speak here at the same rate, as *Levi* did, or higher, *I am upright and perfect in heart toward God, and such hath my perfection and uprightness been, that I have not known my own soul, I have not regarded any self-interests, which have stood in the way of my obedience unto God, or justice toward man.* His friends charged him as if he had been a corrupt Judge, or an oppressour of the poor; I (saith he) am so far from valuing worldly goods or riches beyond my own integrity, that I do not value my life to my integrity. The Apostle *Paul* makes a like profession (*Act.* 20. 24.) His spirit was so free and royall, as when he was going bound in spirit to *Jerusalem*, *the Spirit witnessing to him, that bonds and afflictions did abide him in every City. None of these things* (saith he) *move me, neither count I my life*

Non novi animam pro integritate mea, i. e. ea integritate sum, ut nunquam animæ aut vitæ meæ rationa abduci potuerim ab integritate mea.

life dear (I will not know my life, let it go which way it will) so I *may finish my course with joy, and the ministery which I have received of the Lord Jesus.* *Paul* was none of your poor merchants, who are afraid of their skins. *Pauls* life was cheap in his thoughts when he was to make an adventure for Christ, he (as *Job* here) would not know his life, for the omission of a necessary known duty, or the commission of a known sin.

This first sense yields this profitable meditation.

He whose heart is upright prefers his uprightness before all worldly commodities, and before his own life.

Christ calls his Disciples to this height of resolution (*Luk.* 14. 26.) *If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother and children, yea, and his own life, he cannot be my Disciple*: That is, the service of Christ, and his life being put into the ballance; life must be a light thing weighed with the service of Christ.

חם אני *Abjumor dolore & sic* חם *aliter sumetur quam priore versiculo.* Nescio animam, *i. e. meipsum præ dolore, ideo averser vitam meam. Rab.* Levi.

A second interpretation gives this sense, *I am perfect, yet I know not my own soul*; that is, I am so pressed and overwhelmed with these afflictions, that I cannot feel my self, I scarce know whether I am alive or dead: I know not where I am, my soul doth not act its offices, my soul is (as it were) benummed in me, or asleep; there is not that vigour or activity in my spirit, which I have found heretofore, I despise such a life as this is, who would live a life which is a continued death? there is a truth in this. For as extream and excessive joyes carry a man so far beyond himself, that he scarce knows whether he be alive or no (some have had experience of such raptures and extasies of joy in communion with God) 'Twas so with *Paul* in a case somewhat like (2 *Cor.* 12.) *Whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell* (saith he) for my part, I could not tell what to make of my self, or what became of my body: As (I say) it is thus in the excesses of spiritual joy and consolation; so sometimes in the excesses of anguish and sorrow, a man scarce knows whether he be alive or dead, what his state is, whether in the body or out of the body: he regards neither hot nor cold, friend or foe, wife or children, he forgets to eat his bread.

A third expounds the words as an admiration, *I am perfect, and do ye think I know not my own soul?* Do ye think I am not acquainted with my self? Am I a stranger at home? have I so despised my life (think ye) that I take no notice of it, and am either careless or insensible how things go with me? As if he had said,

said, *I am perfect, and this is the work of a man, whose wayes are perfect before the Lord, he knows and considers his own soul, and grows assured how matters are with him: Ye my friends charge me with these and these failings, and will force them upon me, whether I will or no: though I deny your charge, yet ye re-joyn, and re affirm it upon me, as though I knew not my own soul, or as if ye knew me better then my self. But I am perfect in heart, and I know my own soul, I do not so despise my life, as if it were not worth the looking after, or as if I were not worth the ground I go upon.*

Lastly, Others understand it thus (which appears the fairest and most suitable interpretation of these latter ones) *I am perfect, neither do I know my own soul*; that is, I am not conscious of any evil in my soul, I know of no secret guilt or corruption hidden there: and so *science* is put for *conscience*: *I know not*, is, I am not privy to any evil that my soul delights in, and keeps close, either against God or man, yet such evils are upon me that I despise my life. *The Spirit of a man* (saith *Solomon*) *will bear his infirmity.* Then, what a load of infirmity presses that man, whose *life is a burthen to him, though no sin burden his spirit.* Troubles of conscience do often make the most peaceable outward estate of this life troublesome. And troubles in the outward estate may make those who have great peace of conscience weary of their lives. What it is to despise life, and that afflictions make this life burdensome, hath been shewed in the third and sixth Chapters, and will come more fully to be considered at the first verse of the tenth Chapter, whether I refer the Reader, and forbear to insist upon it here.

Integer sum, nec scio animam meam, i.e. quicquam perversi in anima mea.

I shall only add, that *Job* makes these words as a transition to the second part of his answer to the charge of *Bildad*. For having before given glory to God by acknowledging his justice, wisdome, power and soveraignty in all his actings, he passes to an apology for himself, or a defence of his own integrity against the insultations, suspicions and accusations of his friends; as if he had said, *I have desired to save the honour of God from the least touch of an uncomely thought, much more then do I abhor proud and rude contendings with him: But as for you, my friends, ye must give me leave to be plain with you, I am not the man ye take me for, I have none of that baseness of spirit with which ye charge me, I am no hypocrite, I am perfect in heart with God, and upright in my dealings with men. And yet I cannot but complain of my*

Ingreditur in alteram suæ responsionis partem qua justitiam suam defendit a gravi & libera integritatis suæ et animi bene conscii assertione. Merl.

sad afflictions, and renew my desires that the Lord would give me ease by death, and acquit me from the bands of these calamities by cutting the threed of my life. I know ye judge these outward evils, as the brand of a wicked man, of a man hated by God. But I'll maintain a proposition contradictory to that your opinion: ye shall never prove me wicked, because afflicted, for thus I hold, and I will hold it against you all, as long as I am able to speak, that the Lord destroyeth the perfect and the wicked. The argument may be formed up thus,

That cannot be made a clear proof of mans impiety, which falleth alike upon the good and bad.

But great and destroying outward afflictions fall equally upon good and bad.

Therefore great and destroying afflictions cannot be made a clear proof of mans impiety.

The proof of the minor proposition or assumption, is contained in the three verses immediately following. The discussion and opening of which will give both life and strength to this argument.

JOB Chap. 9. Vers. 22, 23, 24.

This is one thing, therefore I said it, he destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the tryall of the innocent.

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the Judges thereof; if not, where, and who is he?

Videtur hic locum impietatem in ludere quasi apud Job, unum & idem sit piorum et improborum judicium, quodq; Deus haec inferiora non curet. Ilsid. clar.

THis speech of *Job* caused a learned interpreter to tremble, when he read it, conceiving that it savoured strongly of impiety and blasphemy, as if *Job* had mingled the state of the wicked and of the righteous in one; or, as if his mind were, that the Lord did not distinctively order the affairs of the world by the dictates of his wise providence, but left them to be hudled together by inexorable fate, or blind fortune; therefore he concludes that *Job* rather personates a man void of the true knowledge and fear

fear of God, then ſpeaks his own opinion. Thus he cenſures: but let *Job* be well weighed, and his diſcourſe will appear full of truth and holineſs.

This is one thing, therefore I ſaid it.

This is one thing.] As if he had ſaid, You have ſpoken many things to me about the power, greatneſs, juſtice and wiſdome of God, in all which I agree with you, ye and I have no difference about thoſe points, I have alwayes thought highly of God, and I deſire to think humbly of my ſelf; but *here is one thing*, wherein I muſt for ever diſagree from you, here we muſt part.

Hac unum eſt meæ aſſertionis caput.

So that this verſe is as the *limit-ſtone* between *Jobs* opinion, and that of his friends. *Here* he ſpeaks out the *ſpecial tenet* which he holds in oppoſition to them. As if he had ſaid, I yield, and ſubſcribe to your judgement in all but this one, and *in this one thing* I muſt be your adverſary, though I will not be your enemy, *I ſay it, and ſay it again,*

He deſtroyeth both the righteous, and the wicked.

This one thing.] *This is uniform:* So Mr *Broughton* reads it, and in this thing I am uniform, or of the ſame mind and judgement, I am not at all moved from my hold, or ſhaken by any thing ye have ſaid.

Therefore I ſaid it.] That is, becauſe I am of this opinion and judgement, therefore I will not conceal, but bring it forth, and tell you plainly what my thoughts are. The manner of ſpeech, *I ſaid it*, ſignifies a vehement aſſeveration, a liberty and boldneſs of ſpeech, or a conſtant adhering and ſticking to what hath been aſſerted, I will abide by this poſition as long as I live, I cannot be beaten from it, not becauſe it is my opinion, but becauſe it is a truth.

Before I come to the aſſertion it ſelf, obſerve from the preface, *this is one thing,*

That truth is ever the ſame, and we ſhould be the ſame in maintaining truth.

When a man ſpeaks a thing, of which he is very ſure and reſolved to hold, he ſaith, in our language, *That's once*, that is, I have ſaid it, and I will not unſay it, or eat my words. As *Pilate*, when he was deſired to change the inſcription which he had put upon the croſs of Chriſt, anſwered, *What I have written, I have written,*

I will not alter a letter or a tittle: So a confident assertor answers, *What I have said, I have said; This is one thing, therefore I said it.* Truth changes not, why then should I, who have born witness to this truth. *Truth must be stood to.* We have reason to stick to truth, for truth will stick to us; we may say it, and say it again, for it will do us good again and again. ¶ The declarative truth of God is like Christ, the essential truth, *The same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* Though it be very old, yet, *it waxeth not old.*

And because this in the text was a great truth, the very hinge upon which the whole dispute between *Job* and his friends turned, therefore he is so resolute in it. Whence note further,

That great and fundamental truths are to be maintained with much boldness and strength of resolution.

As it is a good bargain to buy a little truth with the expence of much peace: so it is our wisdome, as well as our duty, to maintain it with the expence of our peace. They are the worst sort of cowards who render up the *Holds of Truth* upon composition. No tearms honourable enough can be given for the giving up of that. I grant that our peace and lives are richer commodities, then should be hazarded about *trifling niceties, and the crochets of Schoolmen*: but we ought to *contend earnestly* (and we cannot contend too resolutely) *for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints* (Jude. v. 3.)

Observe thirdly, *A man that hath got one sound principle about any point, will from that refute and repell all objections that can come against him.*

Super hoc axima tanquam super firmissimum fundamentum, quicquid ad suæ innocentiæ contra eos defensionem allatum est stabilitat. Bold.

Job bottoms himself upon this principle, that God *destroyes both good and bad alike with outward destruction.* This is his *great Axiome*, the very foundation upon which he buildeth all he holds contradictory to his friends; the *Fort-Royal* in which he defends himself against all their oppositions and assaults. One truth well mann'd and manag'd scatters and foils a whole Army of errours. One text thorowly understood gives answer to all objections, and unties all the knots of a controversie.

But what's this one thing upon which *Job* makes his boast, and cryes *victoria*? 'Tis this, *He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked. A harsh doctrine, yet a good one. God is to be honoured destroying, as well as saving, killing, as well as making alive.*

כלה

The word which we translate to destroy, signifies an utter blotting

ting out for consumption of a thing, noting that the outward dispensations of God may be severe and terrible to the perfect, as well as to the wicked. *He* doth not say, the Lords afflicts the one, and destroyes the other; chastens the one, and consumes the other; but he consumes and destroyes the one, as well as the other, *He destroyes*

Propriè delet, disperdit, frequenter ad extremam consummationem et consumptionem refertur.

The perfect.

תם

Who is a perfect man in the language of Scripture, and wherein this perfection consists, hath been opened more then once already, and therefore I shall not stay upon it here. Only in general, the *perfect man* is the man in the highest form of holiness; a man full of knowledge, faith and good works, one of the *first three in grace*, yea he may be the *first of the three*, yet all this is no security against the sorest affliction, against affliction to destruction temporal, *He destroyeth the perfect*

רשע

And the wicked.

Inquietum per multas hujus saculi curas sollitudinesq; vagantem.

Or the unquiet and tumultuous man. Every wicked man is an unsetled, and an unquiet man. *He hath no where to rest who hath not Christ to rest upon: He is alwayes out of the way, who is not in him, who is the way.* Wicked men rest only in doing evil, they are never quiet but in motions unto sin. God shews their nature in their name. *Unquiet is their name, and unquietness is with them. Wicked men trouble and vex others as much as they can, but they trouble and vex themselves most of all.*

LXX. *Impium pro potente et locuplete sumunt.*

By these wicked ones the Septuagint understand *mighty and rich men.* Riches are so often got by wickedness, and are occasions to so many of making them wicked, that *wicked and rich* may sometimes change names, or signifie the same person.

Qui pietate et insignis et vita clarus

One of the Greek Expositors understands the text, of those who are great in goodness, and strong in faith, *He destroyes the perfect*, and he destroyes him that is most perfect, even the most eminent in holiness, *the tallest Cedars in grace.* As if the words implyed only a gradation of good men, and not a distinction of good and bad.

Polych. Olymp.

But the letter of the text hath no shew of reason at all for such an interpretation, and therefore I shall pass it by, and take the words as our translation renders them, holding forth that grand dichotomy of mankind, *He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.*

This

This *Job* affirms againſt *Bildads* aſſertion (*Chap.* 8. 20.) who there gives his judgement thus. *God will not caſt away a righteous man*; which (though it may have a true ſenſe, yet *Bildads* meaning being, that God will not caſt a godly man away in this life, or totally deſtroy him in temporals) *Job* denyes, affirming that a godly man may not only be afflicted, but afflicted all his life, and die under that affliction, which in *Bildads* ſenſe is *to be caſt away*. For though *Bildad* did not hold (as *Eliphaz*) that every man who is afflicted, is afflicted for wickedneſs (he thought a good man might be afflicted for the tryal and exerciſe of his graces) yet he was very confident, that God never ſuffered a righteous man to be overwhelmed with affliction: but after ſome ſhort, though ſharp aſſaults, reſtored him again. And therefore *Bildad* numbred them alſo with the wicked, who were deſtroyed as well as afflicted. This *Job* refutes and argues againſt all along, conſtantly holding the contrary principle, that a godly man may be ſo afflicted, as to be deſtroyed, that he may be utterly and for ever ſtript of worldly comforts. Hence obſerve,

Good and bad, righteous and wicked, are often involved in the ſame outward evils.

The ſpiritual eſtate of a righteous man is ſo ſtrong, and ordered in all things, that he can neither totally nor finally fall from, or loſe it, *Grace is above theſe hazzards*. But the temporal eſtate of a righteous man may be loſt, both totally and finally. Riches and health, and honour, are like themſelves, whoſoever is their maſter, fading and periſhing. A righteous man hath a higher tenure of things below, and holds them upon better terms then a wicked man doth; yet he holds them but for a term, they are not enduring ſubſtance to him, as not to others. *A little that a righteous man hath is better then the riches of many wicked* (*Pſal.* 37. 16.) But the righteous may be deprived of what he hath, as ſoon as any of the wicked. (*Eccleſ.* 9. 1.) *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him; all things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; as is the good ſo is the ſinner, and he that ſweareth as he that feareth an oath.* Externals diſtinguiſh not internals. No mans ſpiritual eſtate is knowable by the view of his temporal. *Say to the Land of Iſrael, thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, I am againſt thee, and I will draw forth my ſword out of his ſheath,* (*Ezek.* 21. 3.) And what will the Lord do with it? will he not bathe it in the blood of his enemies, and ſheath it in the bowels of wicked

wicked men? he will: but shall it be bathed in the blood of none else? The next words resolve the doubt, *And* I *will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.* It is a terrible sentence: sword, famine, pestilence make no difference of men or manners; they know neither *faces nor hearts.* The best in a Nation may taste the bloody cup, and feel the cold Iron in their bowels, together with the worst. The *green tree, and the dry tree* may be devoured by the same fire, as the Prophet shadows good and bad, or as some think good and better, falling into the same calamity (*Ezek.* 20. 47.) with which that of Christ (*Luk.* 23. 31.) seems more agreeable. The basket of good figs goes into captivity with the basket of evil figs, under which the good and bad among the Jews were typed, *Jer.* 24. 1. 2, 3.

But though they fall under the same destruction, yet their case under it is as different, as the persons are. Faith and holy reason distinguish where sense cannot.

Pœna satisfactoria et medicinalis.

Judgements upon the wicked men, are for satisfaction to the justice of God. They who are heirs of eternal death, receive part of their inheritance in this life. *All their punishments are payments,* The fore-tastes and beginnings of farther sorrows. These judgements upon the Saints are only corrective or purgative. Their hopes are not destroyed, when their bodies or estates are. Their afflictions are medicinal, and heal while they kill. We must not wrap up the dispensation of God to different persons in the same apprehensions; though his act be the same to both, yet his meaning is not. How the afflictions of the wicked and righteous differ, the Reader shall find more distinctly opened, *Chap.* 5. 17.

Job goes on to confirm his opinion by a further argument, in the 23d verse. For if any should deny his minor proposition, that the Lord destroyes the righteous and the wicked, he proves it thus. *If the scourge slay suddenly, he laugheth at the tryall of the innocent,* that is, he carries himself (so far as the eye can judge) toward the innocent in their tryals, as he doth toward the wickest under greatest judgements, *He laugheth* at the one, and *he laugheth* at the other, which words are at once a confirmation and an aggravation of what he spake before.

Verse

Verse 23. *If the scourge slay suddenly, he laugheth at the tryall of the innocent.*

The former words gave offence to some mindes, conceiving them inconsistent with grace and holiness. Others are more offended with these. And in the letter it is strange language to say, *The Lord laughs at the tryall of the innocent.* This verse, with the fifteenth of the 7*th* Chapter, *So that my soul chooseth strangling*, are concluded by a learned Writer, the sharpest and most questionable passages in the whole book. Hence his conceit, that in the 40*th* Chapter, vers. 5. *Job* aims at these two speeches, *Once have I spoken, but I will not answer*; that is, I will never speak such a word again, that, *I chuse strangling*; *yea twice, but I will proceed no further*; I said also, *That thou laugheſt at the triall of the innocent*, but I will never say so any more, I am asham'd that ever I opened my lips so unadvisedly; 'tis too much that I have spoken twice so sinfully, I will not speak so thrice. The conceit is witty, but the charge lies too heavy. The sense of the former hath been made out fair for *Job*, and I doubt not but his meaning may be so cleared in this latter, that he will need neither reproof nor apology for saying,

Nullum est verbum hac sententia et illa, elegit anima mea suspendium, durium atq; asperius in hoc libro. Philip.

If the scourge slay suddenly, &c.

שוט *Flagellum à circumeundo vel circumdando dicitur, quod videatur circumcingere hominem.*

The verb signifies to encompass or incircle a thing, to twine round about it. And so it alludes to the fashion of a scourge, which begirts the offender, and at every blow winds about his body.

The scourge in Scripture is put for any affliction: plague, sword or famine are called scourges, Isa. 10. 26. *The Lord of hosts shall stirr up a scourge for him*; what scourge! the next words expound it, a scourge, not of cords or wiers, but of swords and spears, a scourge, *according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock Oreb*, that is, the Lord will send a sword upon him: So *Gideon* slew the *Midianites*, Judg. 7. commanding his souldiers to make that terrible shout when they fell on upon their Camp, *The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon.* That great warriour *Attila*, King of the *Hunnes*, who harassed a great part of Christendom with fire and sword, was called, *Flagellum Dei*, The scourge of God. The unbeleiving *Jews* having made a Covenant with death, and an agreement with hell, were very full of faith, such as it was (*Isa.* 28. 15.) *When the over-flowing scourge shall pass thorow, it shall not come unto us.* An *over-flowing scourge* ('Tis an elegant metaphor taken

Flagellum inundans, i. e. omnes sine delectu involvens et proculcans.

taken from waters) is a common, spreading, sweeping judgement, which like an over-flowing river encompasses, circles about, and fetches in all.

Slay suddenly.

פתאם *Subito, statim, ita ut non sentiatur donec res fiat.*

Every scourge doth not slay, and many which slay do not slay suddenly. We usually hear the clashing of the scourge before we feel the smart of it. The Lord shews the scourge and threatens it before he smites with it, he lets judgement hang like a black cloud over the heads of some, long before it falls upon them. But others *He slayes suddenly.*

Some take this suddenness of the scourge in slaying for a mittigation of the judgement, and others for the heightning of it. In the former sense suddenness doth not imply the sudden coming of it, but the sudden killing of it, a scourge which doth its work quickly; so that a man doth not hang long as it were upon the rack of an affliction. The Church of the Jews (*Lam.* 4 6.) complains of their afflictions, as if the judgement of *Sodome* and *Gomorrah* had been more easie and eligible then that which the Lord brought upon *Jerusalem*; not that they thought God had dealt worse with them then with *Sodome* and *Gomorrah*, bnt as to this particular, because *Sodome* was overthrown in a moment, but *Jerusalem* was pined away by degrees with famine. *A sudden scourge is a kind of mercy.* Better dye once then die alwayes: Or, as the Apostle speaks concerning the afflictions of the Saints (*Rom.* 8.36.) *To be killed all the day long.* When one under torture petitioned *Tiberius* the *Roman* Emperour, a bloody cruel tyrant, that he might be quickly dispatcht, he desired not life or pardon, but a speedy death; the Emperour sent him word, *That as yet, he was not reconciled to him, or become his friend.* His cruelty would neither suffer the man to live longer, nor to dye speedily. And some observe, that as the Prophet expresses his trouble at the prosperity of the wicked in their lives, so at this kind of prosperity in their deaths, *There are no bands in their death, but they are lusty and strong,* (Psal. 73.4) that is, when they dye, in their strength, they are not pined away with long and tedious sicknesses: *They live in pleasure, and dye with ease.* They are not bound to their beds, and tyed down with the cords of chronical lingring diseases. It is some favour (if the scourge must slay) to be slain, in this sense, *suddenly.*

Nondum recum ingratiam redij.

Non sunt nodi in morte eorum.

But here the scourge slaying suddenly, is a judgement coming unexpectedly, *They who sleep in security, seldome dream of scourges.* Observe hence,

God can send death and affliction in a moment.

When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travel upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape (1 Thess. 5. 3.) Wicked men are never so near destruction, as when they are most secure. And that (by the way) is the reason why we have least cause to fear those men, who fear God least: Security springs from infidelity, and both from sleighting, if not contemning the Word of God; no marvel then if the Lord hasten his wrath to justifie his truth, and slay them on a sudden who would not believe, no not at leisure. But to the point. The Prophet describes it elegantly (Isa. 30. 13.) *This iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall*; that is, this iniquity shall produce a judgement, which shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, *Swelling out in an high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.* If once a high built wall do but swell, down it comes. *Such a swelling wall fell upon, and slew twenty and seven thousand of Benhadads scattered Army* (1 Kings 20. 30.) *And such a tower in Siloe fell upon eighteen and slew them* (Luk. 13. 4.) The Prophet *Jeremy* at once imprecates and fore-tells a speedy scourge upon the gain-saying Jews, *Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them*, Jer. 18. 22. This hath been the case of many among us, who thinking of no danger have been surprized by a troop, themselves made prisoners, and their houses spoyl'd in one hour. Such was the condition of our *Brethren in Ireland*; it is almost incredible how suddenly that scourge slew them: there was scarce a Protestant that had so much as a suspicion of the danger; nay, some would not believe it, when a great part of the country was on a flame, and the enemy had butchered thousands. That scourge (if ever any) slew both the perfect and the wicked. As mercies may come so suddenly to our senses, that they overcome our faith, so may judgements. Some have been surprized with mercy (*Psal.* 126. 4.) *When the Lord turned our captivity as the streams in the South*: that is, *gave us sudden deliverance* (Rivers in the South rise not from a constant spring, but from accidental raines, which make violent land-floods on a sudden.) At the approach of this sudden mercy, the Jews were like to them that dream. So when the Lord sends sudden judgements, rivers

of

of calamity, rivers of blood, as *rivers in the South*, when he brings in captivity, *as rivers in the South*, then are we in a dream too, and are not only destroyed, but distracted and amazed. But how fast soever judgements come, they come not suddenly upon them who are awake, much less on them who are watching for them when they come.

If the scourge slay suddenly; what then?

He will laugh at the tryal of the innocent.

למכת
Vel à radice מסס *dissolvit. Vel à* נכה *tentavit.*

M. *Broughton* reads it thus, *He scorneth at the melting away of the innocent.* The reason of the different reading is, because the Hebrew word may spring either from a root, signifying to tempt and try, or from another, *To melt and dissolve*: *He scorneth at the melting away of the innocent.* Afflictions are meltings, *they dissolve our comforts*; *yea, our very hearts*, in the same sense that godly sorrow breaks our hearts. *Pity should be shewed to him that is melted* (Chap. 6.) *but ye forsake the fear of the Almighty*; so M. *Broughton* translates there, *The Lord tempted Abraham* (*Gen.* 22. 1.) that is, the Lord tried his faith, to find out of what strength it was, and how much he could trust him in that great business of sacrificing his son.

לעג
Ridere est irridere, subsannare, ut fit ab hostibus, cum eos quos captivos detinent, diuturnis malis conficiunt. Pined. *Significat derisionem quæ fit externo corporis gestu.* LXX. *vertunt per* μυκτηρίζει (e.g.) *Pisc. in* 1 *Cor.* 14. 21.

He will laugh at the tryal of the innocent] at their melting or trying by afflictions. The difficulty is, How God laughs at this tryall? The word notes derision or scorn (*Psal.* 2. 4.) *He that sitteth in heaven will laugh*, there he uses the ordinary word for laughter, *and he will have them in derision.* That's the word in the text. So that properly and strictly it signifies to scorn and deride, and that either by words or gestures, as *putting forth of the finger, shaking the head, or gnashing the teeth*, which are Scripture expressions of highest scorn by gesture.

But how shall we fit this to the business in hand? Will the Lord thus scorn and deride at the trial and probation of the innocent?

The Vulgar was it seems so much straitned to make out the sense, that he reads it negatively, *If the scourge slay suddenly, he will not laugh at the tryal of the innocent.* Others, though they put not in a negation formally and in terms, yet they do it equivalently, and therefore they render it by an interrogation, *If the scourge slay suddenly, will he laugh at the tryal of the innocent?* No, he will not, that's their meaning: the Lord will not sleight or neglect the tryal of the innocent, though he destroyes them, yet he will not deride

them. But we, and most of the learned Hebritians, keep close to the affirmative, *If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the tryall of the innocent.*

Suppositum verbi ridendi dæmon est, qui gaudet videns homines diuturnis malis cruciari. Cajet.

There is a dispute, *whom* we are to understand by this *He*, for some taking this laughing and deriding in the broadest sense, think it too low and dishonourable to be ascribed unto God, and therefore they carry it down low enough, ascribing it to the devil; *if the scourge slay suddenly, then the devil laugheth to see the upright tryed*, he makes merry with the sorrows of the Saints: the devil hath no great cause (how much mind soever he hath) to laugh, considering his condition; but the meaning is, that which gives the devil most content, is to see the righteous persons vexed. And that's a truth *As there is joy in heaven, when good men sorrow for sin; so there is joy in hell, when good men are enwrapt with the sorrows of suffering.*

Impius justum subjannat malis implicitum.

Others make the antecedent to *He*, a wicked man (such are within one degree of Satan his children) *If the scourge slay suddenly*, then, *the ungodly*, who yet thrive and prosper, rejoyce and make sport at the tryal of the innocent; *See what these good, honest, innocent men have got, they thought by their prayers and fastings, by their zeal and strictness to exempt themselves from these common afflictions, they presumed they should be spared, though all the world were consumed; but see they are destroyed as well as others, they smart under the lash as well as we their neighbours, whom they looked upon, as the only whipping stocks, when a scourge should come.* That wicked men laugh and deride the innocent under affliction, and jeer them with, *Where is your God now? what's become of all your praying and fasting? Where are the hopes and confidence, the priviledges and protections ye talked of?* ? is a truth.

But thirdly, We need not ease the text thus, nor releive it out of this difficulty, by fastning the interpretation upon wicked men. Let us take the relative to be God himself, and see how we can make the sense out, *with a saving to his honour. If the scourge slay suddenly He*, that is, the most holy and gracious God, *laugheth at the tryal of the innocent.* How so?

First, I premise this, God doth not laugh or deride properly at the afflictions of his people. No, the Lord is a tender, a gracious and a merciful father to his people at all times, and most tender of them, when they are in their afflictions, when they are in their soreness, and in their sorrows: he is more tender then the most

tender-

tender-hearted mother (*Isa.*49.15.)*Can a mother forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.* Will a mother laugh and deride a poor infant, when it lies sprawling and wants her help? No, much less will God laugh at his people: therefore as laughing noteth hard-heartedness, or unnatural harshness of spirit, the Lord doth not laugh at his afflicted Saints, it is against his nature, against his practice and all experience.

What is it then he laughs at?

First, Positively, thus, *Job* would hear express that the Lord carries himself in outward things, with an equal hand both to the good and bad, as was touched before. The Lord laugheth at and derideth the wicked (*Prov.*1.28.) *I will laugh at their destruction, and mock when their fear cometh.* The carriage of God to his own people is such, as if he did mock and laugh at them also. He that laugheth and derideth at a mans affliction, doth not regard what he suffers, he gives him no help nor delivers him out of his sufferings. Nay, a man that laugheth at another in affliction, will lay more affliction upon him. Even thus in regard of outward dispensations, God deals with his own people, that is, when innocent ones are in affliction and cry unto him, he makes as if he did not hear or regard them, but lets them lye crying it may be day after day in their pains and wants, yea sometimes instead of easing them, he layes more afflictions upon them; poor souls, since they sought the Lord they find an increase of their sorrows. God seems to deal with them, as *Pharaoh* did with the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, who crying to him for release of their burdens, are answered only with, *Ye are idle, ye are idle; let more work be laid upon these men.* *Exod.*5. Or like *Rehoboam*, who threatned his people to make their yoak heavier, while they petitioned he would make it lighter, and told them of scorpions, while they complained of whips. *David* gives us this in his own experience (*Psal.* 77. 2, 3.) *In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord, my sore ran in the night, and ceased not,* (or, my hand was stretched out in prayer, and bedewed with tears) *my soul refused to be comforted* (*David* sought for comfort, but his troubles encreasing, he could not take in the comforts administred) *I remembred God, and was troubled, I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed.* If any thing in the world can ease a troubled heart, thoughts of God can. Thus *David* once relieved himself, *When the people talked of stoning him, he encouraged himself*

Dicitur ridere, quia sic judicant hominum vulgus.

Ridere dicitur, cum contemnere videtur orationem postulantis opem.

self in the Lord his God (1 Sam. 30. 6.) Yet sometimes God seems to think of us least, when we think of him most. A soul complaining may be over-whelmed, instead of being helped. Now, he that layes on further afflictions, slights and laughs at the former. And this is the first way, in which it may be made out, how God laughs at the tryall of the innocent. When they complain, he doth not presently relieve them, nay, he layes heavier burdens of affliction upon them, and makes them more matter of complaining, before they have any matter of rejoycing.

Post orationes meas, ita me semper in miseriis reliquit, ac si me derideret.

Secondly thus, The Lord is said to laugh in regard of the pleasure *He* takes in the fruits, effects and issues of those troubles, wherewith his people are exercised: *He laugheth*, not at the affliction it self, but at the effects and success of it: he knows the issue will be matter of high contentment to himself, and benefit to the Saints. He laughs at their tryal, because he knows they will honour him in their tryals. He laughs not because they are pained, but because himself is glorified. As a father who puts a child upon a very hard task, which yet he is assured the child is able to go thorow with, takes content to see him sweat at it, to pant and blow at it: Or, as a Commander in war, rejoyces when he puts a *party*, of whose valour and skill he is confident, upon some dangerous service: though he knows many of them must bleed for it, and some of them (perhaps) dye for it, yet it pleases him to see such engaged in it. Thus God laughs at the tryals and most desperate adventures of the innocent, for he sees they are men who will bide a tryal, they will *neither shrink in the wetting, nor will their spirits consume in the burning.*

Deum ex virorum fortium, &c. ptorum conflictu non levem capit voluptatem.

And thus a believer is exhorted to laugh at his own tryal, *My breth e n* (saith the Apostle *James*, Ch. 1. 2.) *count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations or tryals.* The more tryals, the more joyes. And thus one beleiver may laugh and rejoyce at the tryal of another, because he knows *that the tryal of our faith, being much more precious then of Gold that perisheth, though it be tryed with fire, shall be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7.

Hence observe,

First, *The Lord may bear himself toward his own people in their affliction, as if he mockt at their afflictions.*

As he laughs at wicked men in earnest, and hath them in derision: so he puts out an appearance of derision in what he doth to his own people.

Second-

Secondly, *To see good men tryed is a delight unto God.*

Laughter is an expression of our inward content and joy. Though the word of the text is scarce used for laughter in a good sense, yet here it may. The Prophesie saith of Christ (Isa. 53. 10.) *It pleased the Lord to bruise him*; God the father was delighted to bruise his Son, not that he delighted in afflicting or striking him, he was tender and dear to him, as the apple of his eye. But with respect to the issue and fruit of it, the Lord was pleased; *His father laughed to see him cast down and suffering, whom he fore-saw conquering and triumphing*: So it is here. A man delights to see wrestlers shew their strength, as also to behold men striving for masteries in fencing or running a race, which are but tryals of activity, and contendings for honours. Thus when the Lord bringeth his innocent servants into affliction he doth but bring them to a wrestling, to a running or a fencing, to see how they can make use of their hands and legs, how they can make use of their spiritual armour, how they can weild the sword of the Spirit, how they can defend themselves with the shield of faith, how they can bear a knock upon the helmet of salvation, how they can walk upon thorns and sharp stones, himself having before shod their feet with the *preparation of the Gospel of peace*. This is the spectacle which God delighteth in and laughs at, and it is a glorious spectacle. The *Roman* triumphs were but childish playes to these of the Saints, called out and clad with the armour of righteousness, which makes them more then Conquerours, over tribulations and distress, over persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and the sword, yea over principalities and powers, over things present and to come; the Saints in their tryal conquer not only all present evils, but all that are possible. They are real victours over those evils, which they shall never feel or see. As in doing, so in suffering, all is reckoned to us, which we are willing to engage in, though actually we do not; no marvel if God laugh at the tryall of such Champions and Christian Hero's. It is the observation of *Seneca*, a Roman Moralist and Philosopher, in his book of providence, speaking of some of the Ancient worthies of *Rome*, *I see not* (saith he) *what Jupiter hath on earth more contentful to him, or to which he would rather turn his eye, then to behold Cato standing firm in the midst of publick ruines, & that though after all his wrestlings as a noble Patriot for the saving of his Country) he found both his honest counsels broken, and his unwearied labours lost, yet he*

Non video quid habeat in terris Jupiter pulchrius si convertere animum velit, quam ut spectet Catonem, jam partibus non semel fractis, stantem nihilominus inter ruinas publicas rectum. Senec. l. 2. de. provid

he did not lose his Spirit, nor was his heart broken. Now, if an Heathen could say, that to see such a man contest with all manner of troubles, was, he thought, a delight for *Jupiter*, and laughter to the idol-gods: May not we changing the persons make his sense the comment of this text, and a proof of this observation? It is a holy delight to the holy God to see his faithfull ones, his *Abrahams* in a tryal, to see his *Jobs* in a tryal, his *Pauls* in a tryal, to see those *Grandees in graces* shew such admirable skill, such courage, such zeal, such faith, such patience, such submission of spirit, to see Saints play the men thus in such spirituall tryals and hottest services, is not this just matter of laughing and rejoycing to the Lord?

And if the Lord take a kind of pleasure in the tryals of his Saints, then surely the Saints ought not to be displeased at their tryals. Hence the Holy Ghost bids the Saints laugh, as well as the Lord laugheth, Jam. 1. 2. *My brethren count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.* Christians, never look upon a tryal with such sad and sowr faces; the face of God is full of smiles to see you at it: shall that make you sad, which makes God rejoyce? *Never grieve but when ye fear ye have grieved God.*

Further, note, *That the afflictions of the Saints are tryals of the Saints.*

They are occasions to shew forth their vertues and their graces; They give proofs both to God and the world, what manner of men they are. Tried ones are precious ones; many others are so, but these appear what they are, they have shewed their mettall. All true faith is good, but tryed faith is best (1 *Pet.* 1. 7.) *That the tryal of your faith* (that is, that your tryed faith) *being much more precious then of gold that perisheth, may be found unto praise*, &c.

Prudens futuri temporis exitum caligiosa nocte premit Deus. Rideq; si mortalis ultra fas trepidat, &c. Horat. *l.* 3. *Car. Od.* 29.

Besides these two interpretations, I shall add, for a close, two more, which may further illustrate the meaning of this laughter ascribed to God, at the tryal of the innocent. First, or

Thirdly, He laughs at the fears and sad fore-casts of his people, who not being able to look thorow second causes, and see the ends of things in their beginnings, presently judge all's lost, the Church must be ruin'd, and the Saints undone, because thus tryed. Now God knowing the end of all actions, not only at *their beginning*, but *from the beginning* (yea, from eternity) he looking thorow the blackest clouds and darkest nights upon the issues of all things derides, the simple conjectures of men about them. The very Heathens have given us such a notion of God in laughter. Secondly, or

Fourthly,

Fourthly, God laughs at the laughter, and derides the joyes of wicked men, who ſee his innocent ones tryed. For they ſay in their hearts, and it may be with their tongues, *Happy we, who have ſcaped ſuch a ſcouring, we would not have been in their coats for a world: better die then live to bring our ſelves into ſuch troubles.* Or, thus, *Now the day is ours, we have prevailed, theſe men are catcht and entangled, we'ſhall do well enough with them now.* The Lord hearing ſuch language at the tryal of the innocent, laughs, to think how thoſe wretches ſhall ſee themſelves deceived, when they ſee theſe who were fallen riſen again, or God by their fall raiſing others, and ſetting his King upon his holy hill of *Sion.*

Laſtly, As God laughs at the tryal of the innocent; ſo let the nocent and impenitent remember and tremble at it, that God will laugh at the approach of their torments, and mock when their fear cometh, when their fear cometh as a deſolation, and their deſtruction as a whirlewind.

Job having thus ſhewed how the innocent are afflicted, ſhews in the next verſe how the wicked are exalted, and from both he infers, that there can be no judgement made of any mans inward ſtate, whether he be *innocent or wicked*, upon his outward ſtate, whether he be *proſperous or afflicted:* The innocent are under the ſcourge, and the wicked are upon the throne, and who doth theſe things, but God himſelf? that's the ſum of this 24*th* verſe.

Verſe 24. *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked, he covereth the faces of the Judges thereof; if not, where and who is he?*

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked.

The earth.] Earth may be taken ſtrictly for the element of earth, as it is oppoſed to fire, water, and air. Not ſo in this place; but more largely, *earth* is put for all earthly things, as *Pſ.* 115. 6. *The heaven of heavens is the Lords, but the earth hath he given unto the children of men*, that is, he hath divided all earthly comforts as a portion or inheritance among men: their lot falleth there.

Thirdly, Earth is put for the inhabitants or people of the earth, *Pſal.* 100. 1. *Praiſe him all ye earth*; ſo the Hebrew which we tranſlate, *Praiſe him all ye people of the earth.* Iſa. 24. 4. *The earth mourneth and fadeth away*; that is, they who dwell on the earth.

Fourthly, By the earth we may underſtand ſpecial Countries or Nations, tracts or parts of the earth.

Fifthly, The earth is put for earthly minded men, and for the false Church, *Revel.* 14. 3. The Saints are *redeemed from the earth*; that is, God hath fetcht them out from amongst false worshippers and impure ones, he hath rescued them from the *world* of Idolaters, and from the superstitious multitude.

In this place *earth* is to be understood in the second, third, or fourth notion, namely, for all earthly comforts; or for the Provinces and Kingdoms of the earth; or for the inhabitants and people of the earth. *These are given into the hand of the wicked.*

Given.] The Lord makes (as it were) *a deed of gift* of these things unto wicked men. So in the 15*th* of this book, v. 19. *Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them*; which some expound of the righteous, *No stranger passed among them*; that is, none came to invade them: Or, as others render it, *No strange thing*, that is, no unjust thing came in amongst them, they had the earth in their own power and rightful possession.

Nihil alienum, sc. injustum. Jun.

To be given, noteth two things; or there is a double act of given.

There is a gift by providence, and a gift by promise. When the Lord is said *to give the earth into the hand of the wicked*, we are to understand it of that common providentiall gift whereby he disposeth of all things to all men; no man hath any thing but by the gift of God. Thus wicked *Jereboam* had the Kingdome of *Israel* given him, and so had hypocriticall *Jehu* for four generations, *They served the providence of God, and the providence of God exalted them.* (Act. 17. 26.) *He hath made of one blood all Nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the time before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation*; that is, he hath (as it were) chalked out, and drawn a line where the bounds and habitations, whither the dominions and possessions of such men shall be extended, and where they shall be confined. That's a gift of providence.

There is a special gift of promise peculiar to beleivers (*Ro.* 8. 32.) *He that spared not his own Son, but gave him to die for us, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* that is, all worldly things; or we may take in whatsoever else concerns our spiritual estate, besides Christ: all the things of Christ, yea & all worldly things come in to the Saints, as a gift by *Christ, who is himself the greatest gift that ever man received, or that God could bestow. How shall he*

deny

deny us any thing, when he hath given us him who is above things? 1 Cor.3.22,23. *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or the world, all is yours, (for) ye are Chriſts.* Believers enjoy earthly things by an heavenly title. *Chriſt is their conveyance.* In this ſenſe the earth is not given to the wicked: The Lord gives them nothing in Chriſt, or for Chriſt, as a Saviour in the Covenant of grace, *Chriſt as a Lord hath bought the wicked* (2 Pet.2.1.) and he gives them what they have, as they are his creatures: as he hath given them a ſubſiſtence, and a breathing in the world, ſo he allots them maintenance in the world.

So then, to receive by donation from God, may note any way of poſſeſſion. What wicked men inherit by ſucceſſion and deſcent from their anceſtours, is a gift of God.

Yea, what they get and hold by violence and oppreſſion, is a gift of God. The earth which wicked men tear out of the hands of the godly; the earth which they ſtain with the blood of lawfull owners, that they may enjoy it; even this is ſaid to be given unto them by God, in that common way of providence. *Nebuchadnezzar* was a cruel oppreſſour, yet he had the earth given him by God, *Jer.27.6. Now have I given all theſe lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babilon my ſervant, and the beaſts of the field have I given him alſo to ſerve him.* God gave the land, yet *Nebuchadnezzar* invaded it, and got it by violence. God ſent him (*Iſa.10.6.*) but he went of his own errand, *verſ.7.* He had no thought of ſerving the will and commands of God, but of ſerving his own ambition and covetouſneſs: yet of this cruel oppreſſour the Lord ſaith, *I have given him all theſe lands*, &c. Thus, *The earth is given,*

Into the hand of the wicked.

There is a queſtion, whom we are to underſtand by the ſe *Donees*, or the receivers of this gift? ſome expound the text (with a ſpeciality of the *devil*) *the earth is given into the hand of that wicked one*, who is, as, *the Prince of the air*, ſo, the *Prince of this world*, and hath great power upon the earth. But take it of wicked men who are the ſervants and heirs of Satan; as the Saints are the heirs of Chriſt, and receive all things from him, ſo wicked men are the heirs of Satan, his children, and what they receive as a common gift from God, they receive by a ſpecial gift from Satan. The devil boaſted to Chriſt (*Mat.4.*) *All theſe things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall*

down and worship me. Though the devil be a very beggar, and hath not a shoe-latchet of his own to give, yet for such services and homages he gives out large possessions of the World (common providence so ordering it) to wicked men, his vassals.

Si flagellatur innocens quid mirum cum mundi judices corruptissimi sint? Terræ potestas per missa est impiissimo demoni, qui dicitur mundi rector, ille efficit, ut reges, principes, judices, quasi obvelatos habeant oculos cæcè et sine discrimine de rebus judicantes. Augub.

Hence these words are interpreted, as a reason of that confusion before spoken of. No wonder if innocent men are under the scourge, for *the earth is given into the hand of the wicked. When they have most power, who have least honesty*, things must needs be turned up-side-down, and all put into disorder. What can be expected from such a tyrannous Prince as Satan, from such wicked instruments as rule under him, but continual disturbance amongst the children of men: especially that good men should go by the worst. Godly men are like to have but little peace, while these have the preeminence. The devil clouds the understandings, and vails the eyes of those Princes and Judges, whom he (in this sense) advances: *And justice is equally wounded and distorted, when Judges cannot see Things, as when they see Persons in judgement. The bounty of God to the wicked, is an occasion of their injury to the righteous.*

But rather take the words (which was hinted before) as an argument, whereby *Job* further proves, that there can be no ground of judgement upon any mans spiritual estate by the appearances of his temporal; for as righteous and innocent persons are under the scourge, and laid low in the world, so wicked men have the earth given them, and are exalted.

I find some reading the text as an expostulation, *Wherefore is the earth given into the hand of the wicked? wherefore doth he cover the faces of the Judges?* As if *Job* did chide with God about this unequal carriage of things in the world, and called him to give a reason of it. But we have found *Job* (in others places) acquitting himself from the suspitions of such a charge, and therefore I cannot joyn with these in laying it upon him here.

Job doth not complain, but affirm, *That the earth is given into the hands of the wicked.* Whence observe.

First, *Wicked men may abound in earthly things.*

They may have the earth and the fulness of it; the earth, and all that is earthly; their bellies are filled by God himself with *hidden treasure* (Psal. 17. 14.) Precious things are usually hidden, and all that's named treasure (though it be but earthly) hath a preciousness

ouſneſs in it. Hidden treaſures of the earth fill their bellies who ſleight the treaſures of heaven, and whoſe ſouls ſhall never have ſo much as a taſte of heavenly treaſures: riches and honour are the lot of their inheritance, who have no inheritance among thoſe *Whoſe lot is glory*. *They have the earth in their hands*, who have nothing of heaven in their hearts: they bear ſway in the world, who are ſlaves to the world: they govern and order others at their will, who are led captive by Satan at his will. Be not offended and troubled to ſee the Reins of government in their hands, who know not how to govern themſelves; or to ſee them rule the world who are unworthy to live in the world. Remember, *the earth is given into the hand of the wicked*. We muſt ſubmit to the judgement of God, though it leaves us under the injuſtice of men. And we have little reaſon to envy them a great portion in this life, who have all their portion in this life.

The moſt wiſe God, who hath all things to diſpoſe, diſpoſes them with infinite wiſdome: he gives good things to thoſe that are evil, but he gives better things to thoſe who are good. He hath a *Benjamins meſſe*, a rich portion for his own children, after all theſe diſburſments to the children of diſobedience. Their portion lies not in earth and duſt, or in the rubbiſh of the world: *Heaven is given into the hand of the Saints: Spiritual bleſſings in heavenly things are given into the hands of the Saints*: The pardon of ſin, the love and favour of God, the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, peace of conſcience, joy in the holy Ghoſt, are gifts worth the having, theſe are *given into the hand of the Saints*. As for the earth, *He giveth that into the hand of the wicked*; and yet all that is not given into their hands. Wicked men have not all the earth, and ſome wicked men have none of the earth. The Lord often makes the portion of his own people fat and plenteous, and the portion of his enemies lean and poor. *Heaven hath not all the earthly-poor, nor hell all the earthly-rich*. God doth not give wicked men all the earth; but all the earth which they have is of his giving. Moſt of the earth is given to be their poſſeſſion; and all the poſſeſſion which is given them, is of earth; therefore it is ſaid, *He giveth the earth into the hand of the wicked*.

And ſeeing, *God giveth the earth into the hand of the wicked*, we may obſerve alſo,

That wicked men have a juſt title to the earthly things which they enjoy.

They

They are not *meer uſurpers*, neither ſhall they be dealt with as *meer uſurpers*. They have no ſpiritual title, no title by Chriſt, they claim not by promiſe, which the Saints doe. They have forfeited their title by ſin, all is lapſed and eſcheated into the hand of the great land-Lord. Their goods are forfeited, and ſo are their lives into the hand of God, and he gives both back for a while into their hands. He gives them their lives back, and reprieveth them; for which time of their reprieve, he giveth them the earth to live upon, or to maintain their lives: and ſo far as they uſe earthly things for the continuance of life, they ſhall not be accounted or reckoned with as uſurpers. They ſhall not be charged for uſing the creature, but for abuſing it, for making the earth ſerve their luſts, not for making it a ſupport of their lives. And ſeeing as the Lord hath given them back their forfeited lives, ſo alſo their forfeited lands by a deed of gift, ſealed with general providence, this is enough to ſecure them in thoſe worldly poſſeſſions (which they have neither got nor hold by injuſtice) from the brand of uſurpation, and from the violence of diſpoſſeſſion. *As what God hath joyned no man may put aſunder; So what God hath given, no man muſt take away. Neither riches nor rule are founded in grace. He hath given the earth into the hand of the wicked.*

Dominium non fundatur in gratia.

He covereth the faces of the Judges thereof.

He covereth] There is ſome queſtion *whom* we are to underſtand, as the antecedent to this relative. *He, who is, he that covereth?* Some make the antecedent, a wicked man. Others ſay, 'tis God. *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked, and he*, that is, the wicked one *covereth the faces of the Judges thereof.* Or, *He*, that is, *God covereth the faces of the Judges thereof.* I ſhall a little open this expreſſion, it needeth ſome uncovering, for it is dark in both relations.

Tegit ne videant quod æquũ & juſtum eſt. Druſ.

Firſt, Look upon that interpretation, which refers it to wicked men. *He covereth*, namely, *That wicked man*, who is preferred and exalted, *covereth the faces of the Judges*; that is, he ſtops the courſe of juſtice. And there are four wayes by which wicked men cover the faces of the Judges.

Munera cæcos reddunt judices.

Firſt, By gifts and rewards. Bribes vail, yea put out the eyes of a Judge, that he cannot ſee to give every one his due. Hence that charge (Exod. 23. 8.) *thou ſhalt take no gift; for the gift blindeth the wiſe, and perverteth the words of the righteous.*

Secondly,

Secondly, The faces of the Judges are covered by threatnings; fear of loss blindes as well as hope of gain. Some send terrible messages to the judge; will not you do as we would have you? Will not you give your sentence and opinion thus? at your peril be it. Now the Judges face is covered, his eyes are put out by a threat; the mist and cloud of a Princes displeasure, of a great mans indignation is before his eyes, *His face is covered.*

Thirdly, the Judges faces are covered by actuall putting them to shame, by casting them out of favour, and clouding them with disgrace, by taking away their commissions, or sending them a *Quietus est*, laying them by as unfit for service; any of these is, a covering to the Judges face.

There is a fourth way of covering the Judges face, to which the second and third are often made a preparatory. And that is, by putting the Judge to death. So much that expression implies in the 40*th* of this book of *Job*, v. 13. where the Lord with infinite wisdome and holiness, insulting over *Job* to humble him, bids him arise and do some great thing, somewhat which might speak him a man of might. *Deck thy self now with majesty and excellency, and array thy self with glory and beauty; cast abroad the rage of thy wrath, and behold every one that is proud and abase him, look on every one that is proud, and bring him low, and tread down the wicked in their place, hide them in the dust together, and bind their faces in secret*; that is, cover their faces as men prepared for death, as men ready to go out to execution. We may expound it by that (*Esther* 7. 8.) where as soon as ever the word went out of the Kings mouth, they covered *Hamans face*. And by that (*Mark* 14.65.) where when Christ was judged worthy of death, the text saith, *They spit on him, and covered his face*: The covering of his face was a mark of a condemned man, held as unworthy to behold and enjoy the light of the Sun, or the light of the Princes countenance. Thus to cover the faces of the Judges is to condemn the Judges, and to take them out of the world by sufferings, rather then suffer them to do right. I find that of *Elihu* (Job 34. 29.) interpreted to this sense, *When he giveth quietness, who can make trouble?* That is, when the Lord doth absolve and acquit a man, giving him a discharge, then he is free, no man can sue him or trouble him, much less condemn him; but *if he hide his face, who then can behold him?* so we translate it, meaning thus, If the Lord hide his own face. But this exposition saith,

If

If the Lord hide the face of that man, that is, if the Lord condemn that man, or pass sentence of death upon him (of which covering or hiding the face was a symboll) then, *who can behold him?* That is, who then can see his face, or have society with him, whom God hath separated to death? It was a custome also among the *Romans*, when sentence was pronounced upon a malefactour, thus, to command the executioner, *Take him away, bind his hands, cover his face, hang him up.* And usually with us, malefactours, who are ready to suffer the pains of death, put a covering upon their faces. This also may be a good sense of the words, *He covereth the faces of the Judges*, that is, a wicked Prince oppresseth and putteth the Judges to death. And whereas good Princes say, *Let Justice be done, though the world perish:* he saith, *Let the Judges perish, rather then justice should be done.*

Quis vei faciem poterit amplius videre, quasi absolutus sit. Bold.

Lictor, colliga manus, caput obnubito, infœlici arbori suspendito. Cic. *in orat. pro* Rabir.

Yet further, the word *Judges*, in the original, notes not only such as are in actual office to determine controversies, whether criminal or civil; but any man that is worthy to be a Judge, or is fit to govern and manage publick affairs, whether in peace or war. And so it implies a suppressing and keeping down those that are most able, and best qualified to undertake any service for States and Kingdoms (*Eccles.* 10. 7.) *I have seen servants upon horses, and Princes walking as servants upon the earth*; that is, I have seen men who are worthy no better imployment then that of a servant, to rub horse heels, or do the meanest offices, such as these I have seen in the saddle, and in their trappings. And, I *have seen Princes walking upon the earth on foot*; that is, men who deserve to bear rule and to govern Kingdoms, who both for ability and integrity, are worthy to have the Reins of authority in their hand, and to sit at the helm, these I have seen walking upon the earth, or tugging at an oar, as common men: that's an evil which *Solomon* saw under the Sun: So here, *He covereth the faces of the Judges*, may have this meaning, Evil Princes keep down and hold in obscurity men of parts and gifts, of Spirit and courage, of honesty and uprightness, and prefer only those who are base and corrupt, who will serve turns, and comply with times.

שפטים

Judices vel officio, vel aptitudine. Nomen judicis apud Hebræos latius patet quam apud latinos, non enim ille tantum vocatur judex qui controversiis vacat, sed etiam qui reipublicam armis tuetur. Bold.

Vidi servos, i. e. servire dignos et principes, i. e. dignos imperio.

Hence note, *That it is the policy of wicked Princes to corrupt and blind Judges, or to employ such as are blind and corrupt.*

They take away power from those who would use power well, and give power to them who are slaves to their wills.

Secondly,

Secondly, *It is the character of a wicked man to bribe the Judge, to put out the eyes, and cover the face of a Judge with gifts.* A good cause fears not the eye of the Judge, and a good man had rather lose his cause, then pervert the Judge.

So much of mans covering the faces of the Judges: now see how God covers them. He who opens the eyes and uncovers the faces of the Judges, that they may discern between cause and cause, doth also cover the faces of Judges, that they cannot discern between cause and cause. As the Lord hardens the heart and blindes the eye in spiritual things, so also in civil, not by taking away the sight which man had, but by with-drawing or denying his own light. The Lord covers the faces of the Judges, when he doth not give them light, nor shew them the path of justice. If God suspend his light, the greatest lights are presently in darkness. God doth not hood-wink or muffle up the Judges, by putting any thing before their eyes, but by hiding his own eyes from them. The Psalmist speaks of Judges thus covered (*Psal.* 82. 5.) *They know not, neither will they understand, they walk on in darkness, all the foundations of the earth are out of course.* We have here the character of evil Judges, and what the consequents of it are, *They know not, neither will they understand, they walk on in darkness* (these three expressions explain the text) and what follows? *Then all the foundations of the earth are out of course*; Law and Justice are out of course, no man knoweth where to have right, or by whom to be protected against wrong.

Tegit, ne videant quod bonum & æquum est. Drus.

Hinc elicimus malos judices etiam a Deo esse. Drus.

Hence observe, *Ignorant and evil Judges are sent by God as a scourge. I gave them a King in mine anger*, Hos. 13. 11.

Lastly, (for the clearing of this) The covering of the faces of the Judges, notes three things.

Judex jocundatissimus esse debet.

First, Ignorance and blindness, or an inability to judge.

Secondly, Inhumanity and cruelty. *The faces of the Judges being covered*, they will not look upon the case of a poor man. It is usuall for an oppressed petitioner to say to the Judge, *Look upon me, good my Lord, cast an eye upon me*; the Judge who will not see, is covered with incompassion.

Solebant judices intra cortinas se continere cum contra reum capitis sententiam pronunciabant. Pined.

Thirdly, Covering of the face imports the affected partiality of Judges; many do as if they could not see, as if their faces were covered. Affection blindes the judgement, and none are so blind as they that will not see. The reason why the Heathen pictured their *Fortune blinde*, was because she disturbed things, as if she

affected blindedneſs, giving good to thoſe that were evil, and evil to thoſe that were good; when Judges give rewards to thoſe that ſhould be puniſhed, and puniſh thoſe that ſhould be rewarded, their faces are covered, they are blind. Judges were anciently pourtrai'd or pictur'd, *without hands, and without eyes*; without hands, as noting that Judges muſt not receive or take gifts: And without eyes, becauſe they muſt not ſee friend or neighbour, great or ſmall, kinſmen or ſtranger; they were to diſtribute juſtice according unto every mans cauſe, and not with reſpect to any mans ſtate or relation. It is ſaid of Chriſt. (*Iſa.* 11.3.) where his Kingdome is deſcribed, that he *ſhall not judge after the ſight of his eyes*; that is, by what appears to the eye, *but he ſhall judge righteous judgement.* In this ſenſe it is the Judges duty and honour to have his face covered. But the covering here meant, is either of ignorance and inability, or of corruptneſs and partiality. All which hinder the Judge from doing his duty, and are blemiſhes of his honour.

Antiqui forſitan eam pingebant, quod malis bona, malabonis indiſcriminatim conſerrentur.

But ſome may object, Shall we attribute this to God? Doth he cover the faces of the Judges? God is pure from all ſin, while he leaves men in their impurity. He is juſt in giving man over to his own injuſtice. So we anſwer, and the next words challenge all to make another anſwer.

If not, where, and who is he?

אם־לא אפו

Si non, ubi ille? Pagn. *Si non, ergo Quis ille? lingua ſanctaeccleſia vilde, Si non (ſupple, Deus quihoc facit) ergo quis eſt, ſupple, qui faciat.*

If it is not the Lord who doth this, tell me who is it? as if he had ſaid, Some may be offended and ſcandalized at my doctrine, that I aſſert, *The earth is given into the hands of the wicked, that he covereth the faces of the Judges*; if any man ſhall deny or ſcruple this, let him ſhew me whence theſe things are, and who is the cauſe of them?

There is a three-fold underſtanding of theſe words: Some make the antecedent to be *the wicked*; As if he had ſaid, *Who but a wicked man will cover the faces of the Judges, and hinder the execution of juſtice?* And ſo they acquit God, accounting it blaſphemy to attribute the act of covering unto him: The Lord is a God of juſtice, he loves judgement, he opens the mind, and clears the the eye, he doth not caſt clouds and miſts before it. It's true ſo far as the act is ſinfull, God forbid we ſhould aſcribe it unto God. But (as was ſhewed before) we need not uſe this *ſubterfuge*, leſt we ſhould lay any aſpertion upon his juſtice and holineſs.

ness. God can leave men to their injustice, without any thought in, or touch of injustice in himself.

Others interpret this Question as *a challenge*; *It is thus, If it be not, where, and who is he?* Who and where's the man that will argue or implead me of falshood in what I have asserted? Who is it that undertakes to convince me of errour in the doctrine I have delivered? This is my opinion, these positions I have laid down for truth, *That the Lord destroyeth the perfect and the wicked, that he laugheth at the tryall of the innocent, that he gives the earth into the hand of the wicked, that he covereth the faces of the Judges*; If it be not thus, if any one hold otherwise, Let me see the man, Let him appear as my *Antagonist, or Opponent. Where, and who is he* that dares charge me with errour? I am ready to answer him.

Si non, ubi est, scil qui me falsi arguat? prodeat si quis meporest falsi arguere. Merc. *Ubi est qui mentirme censet?* Pagn.

But rather take it in the sense before given, If it be not the Lord who doth this, then shew me who it is, *Where, and who is he?* There is an elegant conciseness in the Hebrew, which speaks only thus, *If not, where he?* or, *who he?* The sense is, If it be not God who doth this, shew me, tell me, who is it? And so the words are an exclusion of any other power, ordering and disposing the things of the world. When old *Isaac* was disappointed in his intention of giving the blessing to *Esau*, he trembled exceedingly, and spake in the language of the Text, *Who, where is he?* (Gen. 27. 33.) As if he had said, *I thought thou my Son* Esau *hadst brought me venison before and if it was not thou, I know not who it should be, I was never so deceived in my life, if it was not thou.* Such a broken speech *Job* uses here, *If it be not God who doth these things, I am much deceived, for I know not any in the world to whom I might probably assign them, but only unto him. You must be wiser then I, if you find any thus powerfull besides God. If not, where, and who is he?* Whence observe.

First, That, *the greatest confusions in the world are ordered by God.*

What greater confusion then this, to see the earth given to those who deserve not to live upon the earth? that they should rule the world who are unworthy to breathe in the world? Yet even these things are disposed by the Lord, and are the issues of his counsels, *That wherein we see no order receives order from the Lord.*

Secondly, Obſerve,

The very confuſions that are in the world are an argument of the power of God.

For ſeeing the world continues in the midſt of ſuch confuſions, it ſhews there is a mighty power, ballancing theſe confuſions ſo exactly, that they cannot ruine the world. *If there were not an over-ruling power in God, wicked men ruling would ſoon ruine all. There are myſteries of providence, as well as of faith.* And many are as much puzzled to enterpret what God doth, as what he hath ſpoken. I find Heathens often ſtumbling at this ſtone, and ungodding their Idol gods at the ſight of ſuch diſtributions among men. When evil takes away good men, this is my next thought (ſaith one of them) *I am ſollicited to think there are no Gods.* Another obſerving how unequally men were buried, buries God in that obſervation. *Licinus* a cruel oppreſſor lies interred in a ſtately monument. *Cato*, a ſober, grave, wiſe, and juſt Senatour, hath a mean and poor Sepulchre, ſcarce looking above the ground. *Pompey the great*, that famous Commander and Conquerour had no tomb at all, he was buried no man knoweth where. *When we ſee* (ſaith he) *things go thus, who would think that there are any gods?*

Cum rapiunt mala fata bonos, ignoſcite faſſo, Sollicitor nullos eſſe putare Deos. Ovid. *Marmoreo Licinus tumulo jacet, et Cato parvo. Pompeius nullos quis putet eſſe Deos?*

Thus they ſtumbled at the ſuppoſed uneven diſpenſations of their Idol gods. And we find great offence taken, and an horrible blaſphemy belched out againſt the true God, upon the ſame occaſion, and almoſt in the ſame terms (Mal. 2. 17.) *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words, yet ye ſay, wherein have we wearied him? When ye ſay, Every one that doth evil is good in the ſight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them, or where is the God of judgement?* Though they fell not directly into the former blaſphemy, to conclude there was no God, becauſe wicked men proſpered; yet they fell into a blaſphemous opinion, that God delighted in, and loved wicked men becauſe they proſpered, *Wherein have we wearied the Lord?* Yes, ye have. Not that the Lord is at all moved or troubled in himſelf with the contumelious ſpeeches of men; but thus, if any thing would tire, and weary him, this may, to hear himſelf arraigned and judged by the world, as a lover of evil men, becauſe he doth not preſently ſmite them with the viſible marks of his diſpleaſure; that becauſe the earth is given into the hand of the wicked, therefore the Lord muſt needs be a friend to the wicked.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Obserue, That,

No creature is master of his own wayes or ends.

The Lord giveth the earth into the hand of the wicked. Man cannot get the earth into his own hand, let him be as wicked as he will: *The Lord covers the faces of the Judges:* If he enlighten them, no man can cloud them, if he open, no man can shut.

No creature can do good without the directing and enabling hand of God.

No creature doth any evil without the supporting and overruling hand of God. (Isa. 41.23.) *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods, yea, doe good or evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together.* Let us see you do any mischief, if ye can. Man is set upon mischief, but he cannot act mischief, unless God (at least) permit. *We were in an ill case, if man could do all the evil he hath a mind to.*

It is matter of comfort, to consider that the wayes and issues of good and evil, are in his hand, who is good, and doth no evil.

JOB Chap. 9. Vers. 25, 26.

Now my dayes are swifter then a post, they flee away, they see no good.
They are passed away as the swift ships, as the Eagle that hasteth to the prey.

THese two verses are a confirmation of *Jobs* former argument; as he had shewed in generall, that the wicked are exalted, and the innocent afflicted; so now he shews the latter branch from his own experience or example.

Vers. 25. *My dayes are swifter then a post, they flee away, they see no good, &c.*

We have here three similitudes, by which *Job* sets forth the uncertainty of his prosperous estate, and how soon the time wherein he enjoyed it was blown over,

1. The

1. 2. 3. } The similitude of a { Post. Ship. Eagle.

As in the seventh Chapter he used three similitudes, *viz.*

1. 2. 3. } of { A weavers shuttle. The winde. A dissolving cloud.

So here he bringeth in three more to clear the same point. *Job's* thoughts travel'd thorow all parts of the world to find out illustrations of mans frailty. In these two verses three of the four elements are enquired into, The Earth, The Air, and the Water. A Post upon the Earth, A Ship upon the Water, an Eagle in the Air, are called in as witnesses to this truth.

Now my dayes are swifter then a Post, &c.

Now my dayes;] That is, my prosperous dayes, so Mr. *Broughton* glosses. Troublesome times are all night and darkness: yet we may take it of dayes in generall, they *are swifter then a Post*.

קלל *Levitas et velo citas, tam ex Græco quam Hebræo etiam Latino pro eodem accipiuntur.*

Levis armatura militis celeriter subveniunt.

רץ *Cursor qui ex una urbe in alteram, &c. proficiscitur; cum literis aut nunciis.*

The word which we translate *swifter*, signifies any thing that is light, because light things are quick in motion. We call a man that is *swift of foot*, *light of foot*. And here it is joyned with that, which among men is most swift and passing, *a Post*, who rides or runs without any stop or stay, without the least considerable stop or stay: So that it is grown into a proverb: *To run post*, or, *To ride post*, is as much as to be in hast: To say, *You are in post-haste*, is to say, you are in great haste. *My dayes* (saith *Job*) *are swifter then a post*, they out-run those curreers sent out upon the most important messages. The post whether sent to carry news, good or bad, or intelligence for the dispatch of business, publick or private, is engaged to ride hard; he must not spare horse-flesh, or (as we commonly speak) *suffer the grass to grow under his horse-heels*. Hence observe,

First, *Time is very swift, 'tis gone suddenly.*

My dayes are swifter then a post. We seldome consider, or consider as we ought, this common truth. We live, for the most part, as if we could not tell how to get rid of our time; or, as if we were weary of our time, and knew not how to spend it out, as if time were rather chained to a *standing post*, then were like a *running*

ning post. The Ancients emblem'd Time with wings, as if it were not *running*, but *flying*.

The next word in the text comes near that sense, *They flee away*. My dayes (saith *Job*) *flee away*. The word doth not signifie flying, as a fowl with wings; but fleeing as a fugitive from hard bondage, or as a man from some imminent danger, which, because 'tis done with speed, therefore the word imports any speedy motion, especially that of a post. A post riding or running, is an excellent embleme of Time. There are many considerations in *post-riding*, which shews how exceeding speedy time must be, to which it is here compared.

First, A post rides upon fleet or speedy horses.

Secondly, He rides his horses upon their speed; a man may have speedy horses, and go softly, but a post spurs on.

Thirdly, A post hath change of horses at every stage, that he may keep them upon their speed.

Fourthly, He hath horses standing ready for change; they are not to fetch out of the field, or to make ready when he comes to his stage, it is but leaping into the saddle and away.

Fifthly, He that rides post, makes no long meals, much less feasts, he takes a bit and away.

Sixthly, He lies not long a bed, he scarce goes to bed till he comes to his wayes end.

Seventhly, A post hath extraordinary pay for his service, and that will cause him to make speed.

Eighthly, Sometimes he rides upon pain of death, with a halter about his neck. No man will loiter, when his life lyes on't.

Ninthly, If a man rides post, all must give him way, he picks and chooseth his path, and no man must hinder him.

Tenthly, he stayes not to salute, much less like other travellers to gaze and view the Country, the Towns, buildings, Gardens, *&c.*

All these things laid together, evince, that the Post makes speed. Yet, saith *Job*, *My time out-runneth the post*, my time goes faster then he: The post may stay a little sometimes, but time will not stay at all: The post may stay for change of horses, but the chariot of the Sun never stayeth to change horses (the Sun is the measure of time) and that makes no stop, hath no stages or baiting places, *Our dayes are swifter then a post*.

Further, Experiences speak this most true of that speciall time,

time, the time of prosperity. The best things of the world are in a moveable, in a passing, posting condition. They scarce abide with us long enough to learn what they are. If a man ride post, we can hardly discern who he is. The good things of the world, the pleasures and profits, the *form and fassion of it pass away* so fast, that none can perfectly report what they are, excepting this, *Transitory and vain*: As the artificial fashions of the world, the fashions in building and in apparell, pass so speedily, that few know what the fashion is, before 'tis gone; a new one is abroad, before the greatest number are in the old: So the natural fashions of worldly things, (some in themselves, all as to our enjoyment) the excellency and dignity, the lustre and beauty of the creature are out of sight, before we can well say of what colour and shape, or what manner of things they were. When the Painter takes the perfect feature of a mans face, or the lineaments of his body, he must sit. The world sits not so long with any man, as for him to take the picture of it. *Creatures perish in their using*; while they are in our hands we know not what they are, for even then they are perishing and declining from what they were. One said when a creature comfort was taken from him, if I had it again, methinks I could enjoy it; we seldom enjoy what we have. And what we have is alwayes *in transitu*, passing from us, while we have it; it is in motion, while in possession. *We* can scarce be acquainted with it, because it stayes so little with us. Hence *Job* concludes this similitude.

They see no good.

My good dayes run so fast, that I cannot see the good of them.

Not to see good, is, not to have the least experience of good. For the eye takes in it's objects, and judges of them (so much Philosophers teach) sooner then any other sense. The eye is not long about it's business. It is the sense of quickest dispatch. So that it is, as if *Job* had said, the good things of this life are so transient, that I am so far from feeling or tasting them, *&c.* that (which is done with the least delay, and expence of time) I have not time enough to see them. When men ride upon speed, or when any thing passes swiftly before us, we have but a glimpse, scarce a sight of those objects.

Omnia mihi præreptasunt prinsquam ea senserim. Bez.

Besides, *To see good* is to enjoy good, as was shewed, *Chap.* 7. verse 7. And when he saith, they (*scil.* his dayes) *saw no good*, his meaning

meaning is, that he saw no good in his dayes. Till there is a consistency or a fixedness of good, there cannot be a full enjoyment of good. The reason why in heaven we shall have so much happiness, is, because all the good in heaven is a fixed good. *Time passes, but eternity stands. Eternity is a fixed Now.* The things of heaven shall not perish in the using, nor shall the fashion of them pass away. In heaven vision will be everlasting, we shall ever see good, and that ever-seeing shall be an ever-enjoying of good. Here on earth we see God thorow a glasse darkly, and we see all good in such post-haste, passingly, that we rather see it not, then see it. Especially while we remember that good passes by us in the company, yea in a croud of evils, our sight of it (as when we are called to behold one man riding speedily among many) must needs be hindred. Yea oftentimes evils stand so thick about us, while good posts by us, that we cannot look thorow them to the good, which is before us. In heaven, as good stands to our eye, so it stands alone, there's no interposition of evil to ecclipse the beauty, or darken the sight of it. There we shall see, and see nothing but good. Here we see much besides, yea we see either none at all, or very little good, and that but a little.

They flee away, they see no good.

From the Post, who runneth upon the Land, *Jobs* next comparison carries us to the motion of a Ship at sea, and anon to that swifter motion of an Eagle in the air.

Verse 26. *They are passed away as the swift ships, as the Eagle that hasteneth to the prey.*

They are passed.

That is my dayes, are passed, and with them all the contents and comforts which I had in those dayes: we are to take dayes, as cloathed with all their contentfull occurrences and circumstances. כלה

They are passed away.

Or, they are glided away insensibly. אני

As the swift ships. Navis ab אנה

Not only as the ships, *but as the swift ships.* A ship is a fabrick

for the sea, a house upon the sea, a moveable house; and as it moveth variably, so it moveth swiftly: The inconstancy of the windes makes the motion of the ship unconstant; and the strength of the windes makes the motion of the ship swift. So that to say, his dayes passed as a ship, is an aggravation of their sudden passage. A ship passeth without any stop from it self: The Ship needs not stay to bait, to sleep or rest, while it is upon its journey; whatsoever they doe who are within the ship, the ship moves on, if they prepare it for motion.

In Pihil, obvenire, occurrere fecit; quæ sic dicta est, quod remigum aut ventorum impetu impellatur et feratur.

Job puts an emphasis upon this comparison, his dayes were not only as a ship, but as a *swift ship*, there is much in that addition.

The Hebrew is, *My dayes are as the Ships of Ebeh*, which is diversly rendred.

Ebel, flumen rapidissimum in Arabia. Rab. Sol. Bold.

1. Some take the word *Ebeh* to be the name of a river in the *Eastern* part of the world, about *Arabia*, neer the place where *Job* lived. A late traveller hath observed a river of a very swift motion, neer *Damascus*, and not far from the Sepulchre of *Job*. Now a ship that moveth in a swift river, besides that it may have the winde, hath also a great addition to the speed of its motion from the force and strength of such a current. Thus, saith *Job*, *my dayes* move as the ships upon *Ebeh*, as ships upon the streams of that fierce, swift river, which go down with speed; as we see boats with the tide, and so proportionably greater vessels, where there is a river and a current proportionably to bear and carry them.

אבה

Desideravit. Naves voluntariæ, vel desiderij sc summo desiderio ad portem properantes.

2. Others conceive the word, not as a proper name, but as signifying *desire*, from *abah*, to desire with earnestness, and then the sense is rendred thus, *My dayes are passed away as ships of desire*; that is, as ships, which being laden with rich commodities, the Master and the Pilot desire earnestly to bring the ship speedily to her Port, that so they may put off their commodities, and make sale of the rich lading that is in her. The winde doth not so much fill the sails of such a ship, as desire doth the mindes of her marriners. Thus *Daniel* was called a man of desires, because he was a man so precious and desireable. A ship richly laden is much desired; such a ship is a great charge to the owners and merchants, they therefore send to speed the ship home, as fast as they can. (Thus saith *Job*) *My dayes pass as a ship that hath the most desired commodities.*

Vir desideriorum.

3. The Chaldee and others, give a further note upon it, deriving the word from *Abah*, whence *Ebib*, which signifies a stalk growing up early from the earth, and bringing forth the first ripe fruit, of any kind; and so it is put for any early ripe Summer fruit for early plums, apples, cherries, &c. And then the sense is, *My dayes are like to a ship which carrieth early fruit:* So the Vulgar, *Like a ship carrying apples.*

Fructus primitivus.

Naves poma portantes. Vul.

Now a ship that carries such fruit makes great haste, because the fruit will spoyl and rot, if not speedily put off. Ripe fruit is a commodity that will not keep; unless they have a quick passage, all is lost. *My dayes* (saith *Job*) *passe even as a ship* that carries ripe Summer fruit, which are hasted away with all speed, lest they perish before they come to the Port.

Petranseunt cum navibus fructus delicatorum portantibus Targ.

4. There is another sense given by those, who derive the word from a root, which signifies, *to hate and oppose, or to be an adversary*, and then it is thus rendred, *My dayes pass away as a Pirats ship*, or as a ship that goes out to take a prey, as a ship that goes out to take prizes upon the sea. Now we know when ships go out either upon piracy, which is robbery at sea, or upon any lawfull way of taking prizes by publick authority, these ships of all others are the swiftest, they are prepared on purpose to make way and overtake other ships; their lading is not burden but ballast, that they may be swift of sail; so saith *Job*, *My dayes pass away like a swift ship*; not like some great Merchant-ship deeply laden, which can make no great way in the sea, but as a ship of piracy, that hath nothing in her but weapons, artillery and ammunition, to oppose those they meet, such as are your nimble Frygots, Fly-boats, and Catches, which sail with every winde, or Galleys which pass without winde, carried with strength of arms and oars, all being vessels used to run in upon, and surprize a booty. This also is a good interpretation; and so M. *Broughton* translates it, *My dayes do fleet away as the pirats ships.* That's the second similitude, *My dayes are passed away as the swift ships.*

אוֹיֵב

In imicari, piratarum naves, quæ onorariæ non sunt, sed tantum ad capiendam prædam.

And as an Eagle hasteneth to the prey.

This is the third similitude. A ship moveth swiftly, especially a ship upon a swift river; or a ship laden with desireable commodities; or a ship laden with summer fruit; or a pirats ship, a man of war. But here is an instance implying greater speed then that of the most speedy ship, *As an Eagle hasteneth to the prey.*

An Eagle of all the fowls of the Air is the swiftest and strongest of wing: an Eagle is the chief of birds. We find in Scripture, swiftness expressed by this similitude of an Eagle (*Hab.* 1.8.) the *Chaldeans* who invaded the people of *Israel*, are thus described, *Their horse-men shall come from far, they shall flee as the Eagle that hasteth to eat.* See the like instances, *Jer.* 48. *Jer.* 49. *Ezek.* 17. And in *Isa.* 40. 31. *They shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles*, &c. noting the exceeding swiftness of the Saints in the wayes of God, the speed they shall make in wayes of holiness; though the youths faint, and the young men utterly fall, yet they that wait upon the Lord shall mount up with wings as Eagles, that is, they shall be swift and strong.

But here is more expressed then the natural swiftness of the Eagle, here is somewhat occasionall, which adds wings to her wings. We had four interpretations of the ships swiftness. Here is one expression exceeding all those four, *An Eagle hastening to the prey.*

Quoniam avidissimè appetit, ideo perni ssimè volat San.

An Eagle is a greedy fowl. Hence that of Christ (*Matth.* 24.) *Where the carcase is, thither the Eagles gather together*; that is, look where ever there is any prey, there you shall have Eagles: if there be a carcase to be had, the Eagle will be sure to make toward it, *My dayes* (saith *Job*) *are passed away, as the Eagle hasteneth to the prey.* The Naturalists observe that the Eagle soars aloft in the air, so high, that the eye of man cannot discern her, yet the Eagle is of such a piercing eye (Eagle-eyed is a proverb for quick-sighted) that she can discern her prey upon the earth, yea in the water, and as soon as the Eagle espies her prey, she pours or sowces down upon it like a thunderbolt, like a bullet out of a gun, or an arrow out of a bow. Thus *Job*'s dayes passed as an Eagle in her flight, and not in her ordinary flight, but as an *Eagle that hasteneth to the prey*, when hunger adds swiftness to her wings; such was the passage of his dayes.

Tanquam fulmen se è sublimi in terram jaculatur.

There is somewhat further observable in this, from the translation of the Seventy, who render it thus, *Is there any sign or mark in the way of a ship, or of an Eagle?* So the meaning of *Job* should be, that his life, in respect of former comforts and contentments, was past away, and had left no mark, no sign behind it. The ship in the sea passeth away, and there is no rode, no tract left; and the Eagle in the air passeth, and you cannot see where the Eagle made her flight, the air closeth presently, there is no way

Numquid est navibus vestigium viæ, aut aquilæ volanti? &c. Sept.

way to be seen: *Solomon* useth those similies, *Prov.* 30. 19. *There be three things which I know not, the way of an Eagle in the Air, the way of a Serpent upon a rock, and the way of a ship in the Sea:* And it is frequent in Authours to express those things which pass away, not leaving any tract or print behind them, by the motion of a ship in the sea, and of an Eagle in the air.

Quæ nullum sui cursus signum relinquunt per avium volatum et navium, transmissionem significantur. Sanct.

Hence note, That

The best of worldly things when they are gone, are as if they had never been.

There are two motions which will certainly leave a mark behind them: First, motions in sin. 2. In holiness: Every step we tread in the wayes of sin, or of holiness, leaves a print, a remembrance behind it; but when the riches and honours, the pleasures and contentments of this life are past, nothing remains of them. It is said, *Dan.* 8. 5. (which may serve for the illustration of this place) in the vision of the *He-goat, that he touched not the ground:* that *He-goat* was a type of *Alexander the great*, who set up the *Grecian* Empire; and he is compared to a *He-goat*, which did not touch the ground, because of his speedy conquests. When a man or beast runs upon the ground with extream speed, we say, they do not touch the ground. When the *Hare* leaves a deep tract, the hunter knows she runs slowly and is almost spent. *Alexander* conquered the world sooner then a man could well travel over it. And as *Alexander* came in, so he passed out, both in his person and posterity: For within a short time no man could tell what was become of the *Grecian Monarchy*; the conquests of *Alexander* could not be found, no more then the way of a ship in the Sea, or of an Eagle in the air, or of a man running so fast that he leaves no print behind him.

Secondly, Taking both these similitudes in the ordinary notion, as they import the swift passage of *Jobs* prosperity. 'Tis questioned, *How Job* can be excused for speaking thus sleightly and undervaluingly of his temporall estate, which was so raised, and so enriched, that he was an eye-sore to the devil; Satan envied him, because of his abundance. And doth he now make nothing of it? Was it nothing to be the greatest man in the East? is he not very unthankfull for, or very forgetfull of the goodness and bounty of God to him? should he not rather have said, I have had my dayes of prosperity, my worldly comforts, and I enjoyed these a long time?

Jobus; ad Satanæ invidiam, benedictum tomum, benedictam familiam habebat.

I anſwer, *Job* ſpeaks not this to obſcure the favours of God to him, or ungratefully to paſs by his bleſſing; but he anſwers the objection of his friends, and maintains the argument he brought againſt them. His argument was, that the eſtate of a godly man in this life, is as tranſitory and as brittle, as the eſtate of a wicked man, and that therefore there can be no diſtinction made of men by outward diſpenſations: To clear which he ſaith, *Look to my good dayes, they are paſt away ſwiftly*, and there's nothing remaining of them. Whence obſerve,

That the outward eſtate of the beſt men in the world, is as tranſitory and fading as that of the worſt in the world.

My dayes (ſaith *Job*) my comfortable dayes are paſſed away, *Every man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity*, Pſal. 39. 5. It is not only a wicked man, whoſe outward eſtate is vain, but every mans; *Davids* Crown and Scepter were fading, vaniſhing flowers. *Abraham* and all the Patriarchs ſaid (Heb. 11.) *We have here no continuing City*; neither City nor Citizens have long continuance here. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 7. 31.) ſpeaks to the Saints, and bids them take their hearts off from the world, and not to drench or ſteep their ſpirits in things here below; why? *The faſhion of this world paſſeth away*, the faſhion of the world in your hands; if you have the world in your hands, the faſhion of it will periſh there, as ſoon as in the hands of other men. Do not think that the world is put into an abiding ſtate, or into an unalterable faſhion for your ſakes. A godly man and a wicked man (though made of the moſt different faſhion) live in a world, and poſſeſs worldly things of the ſame faſhion.

Quem ad modum qui navigat, ſive flet, ſive ſedeat, vadit quia impulus navis ducitur: ita et nos, ſive vigilantes, ſive dormientes, ſive tacentes, ſiveloquentes, ſive nolentes, ſive volentes, per momenta temporum quotidie in finem tendimus. Greg.

Secondly, As from the firſt ſimilitude, ſo from theſe we learn, *How tranſitory our time is.* See how *Job* multiplies compariſons, that if we will not learn by the firſt, we might yet be convinced by a ſecond and a third. Goe to the land, ſee time upon the ſpur, in the ſwift riding Poſt. Goe to the ſea, ſee time upon the windes, in the ſwift ſailing ſhip. Goe to the air, ſee time upon the wing, in the ſwift flying Eagle. Theſe all preach the ſpeedy paſſage of time. How ſad is it to ſee men live, as if there dayes were *ſnail-pac'd*, not *poſt-pac'd*? as if time lay alwayes at an anchor, or were winde-bound, and could not uſe her ſails? as if it had leaden heels and not wings, or were bound hand and foot, and could not ſtir? The Apoſtles caution is, *Redeem the time*; and now we have the Apoſtles argument to enforce it, *The dayes are evil.* If time go

out

out of your hand, you cannot fetch it back again; there is no rhetorick can recall it, or price redeem it: time is such a commodity, as all the power in the world cannot recover, if lost and let slip. If all the Crowns and Kingdoms in the world should be laid down as a reward for the bringing back of one hour, yea of one moment of time, they could not obtain it. Therefore improve the present time: No time is yours, but the present, the time that's gone comes no more; the time that is to come, may find you gone before it comes: your time is only the present time, and that is past assoon as present.

But not to stay long upon that which moveth so swiftly, our dayes and time: I will pass to the other branch, wherein *Job* further clears the point in the five following verses.

JOB Chap. 9. Vers. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

If I say I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heavinesse, and comfort my self:
I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.
If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?
If I wash my self with snow water, and make my hands never so clean;
Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.

THese words contain a proof of the latter part of *Job's* assumption. *He* had affirmed, that an innocent and righteous person may qiuckly lose all his outward comforts; which he illustrated by three similitudes: now he proves that he may be entangled and lime-twig'd with afflictions beyond hope of escape. This he doth in the 27, 28, 29. verses. Which he amplifies with hyperbolicall strains, in the 30. and 31. verses. The highest rhetorick of his sorrows being let out, to shew how remedilesse his sorrows were. *If I wash my self with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean; Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths shall abhor me*; things are ill with me, and I see not, which

which way to mend my ſelf. I am ſo far from any probability of help by contending and ſtriving with God, that I have no hope of it by waſhing and cleanſing my ſelf. As carnal and earthly ſuccours fail me, ſo theſe heavenly and ſpiritual duties will not ſuccour me. I will give you the ſum and ſubſtance of theſe five verſes, in a few words together, and then open the particulars.

The general ſenſe of the context may be thus conceived, As if *Job* had ſaid;

I poor man in this condition ſtudy to forget the troubles which are upon me; and laying aſide all anger, paſſion and diſcontentments with which ye charge me, I labour to refreſh and revive my ſelf with hopes of ſome dawning or near drawing deliverance; but while I am aſſaying to doe this, my ſorrows aſſault me afreſh, and even over-whelm my infant hopes, my beginning, budding comforts, with mighty terrours; ſo that now I even deſpair of recovery out of the band of my affliction, and am perſwaded that I ſhall not only not be delivered that I may appear or be accounted pure and innocent, but if continued afflictions be an argument of wickedneſs (as you affirm) I ſhall have the bonds of my preſent trouble ſo faſtned upon me, and ſuch new ones, it may be ſtronger ones added, that I ſhall ſtill look in your eyes, and be viewed in the glaſs of your opinion, like a wicked man. Wherefore then ſhould I deceive my ſelf with hopes that I ſhall be delivered? Or that God will awake for me, and make the habitation of my righteouſneſs proſperous? When as I beleive and am very confident, that how pure and righteous ſoever I am, or (by further waſhing and cleanſing, beleiving and repenting) ſhall appear to be, yet the Lord hath an intent to try me further, even to the uttermoſt, and will caſt me into the ditch, mire and dirt, of further afflictions; ſo that they who make up their judgements by your rule, though they were as near to me as the clothes upon my back, muſt yet abhor, and loath me (as ye my friends now doe) as a wicked perſon. He ſeems to ſpeak as the Apoſtle doth, 1 Cor. 4. 9. *I think that God hath ſet forth us the Apoſtles laſt, as it were men appointed unto death, for we are made a ſpectacle to the world, and to Angels, and to men.*

This is the ſum and general ſenſe of theſe five verſes. The words are full of difficulty, and there is much variety of judgements about them: but I hope in the cloſe to make out a ſenſe upon every particular, which ſhall be matching and ſutable with this which hath been given in generall.

If

If I say, I will forget my complaint.

If I say.] In this *Job* answereth directly to the charge of *Bildad* at the 8th Chapter, vers. 2. *How long wilt thou speak of these things, and shall thy words be like an East-winde?* To which answers *Bildad*, *If I should cease speaking (as thou seemest to chide me into silence) If I should say, I will not complain any more, I will give over these mournfull discourses, and bide in my strongest pains, What then? will the event prove what thou hast promised? surely no, I am afraid of all my sorrows, and almost assured, that they will return upon me. If I say I will forget my complaint.*

I will forget.

The word which we render [*forget*] may signifie a three-fold forgetfulness.

שכח *Est oblivisci, ut* זכר *Recordari cum cura & diligentia.*

First, Forgetfulness coming from the neglect of our natural abilities, when we are careless and take no heed to remember.

Secondly, Forgetfulness arising from the weakness of our natural abilities; when though we are carefull, yet we cannot remember.

But *Job* means neither of these, he intends a third kind of forgetfulness, even a studied and an affected forgetfulness; when how able soever we are, yet we will not, or would not remember. *If I say, I will forget my complaint*; that is, if I purposely set my self, or labour to forget my sorrows, yet I cannot get off their remembrance. As the Hebrew (*Sachar*) signifies not only the natural act of memory, but diligence in remembring: So doth the Hebrew (*Zachah*) to forget. It is sometimes as hard a work to forget, as it is at any time to remember. How do the damned in hell strive to forget their pains and complaints? they would count it a happiness, if they could put their misery out of minde and memory one hour; but they cannot. And they can no more forget what they have felt, then not be sensible of what they feel. *If I say, I will forget*

שיח *Sapit hoc verbum meditabundum quendam sermonem, et animum intellectus vocisq; discursum.*

My complaint.

The word notes meditation, and here, *a mournfull meditation*, a breathing forth in mournfull expressions. The same word is used, *Chap. 7. vers. 13. When I say, My bed shall comfort me, and my couch shall ease my complaint* (or my mournfull meditation) *then*

thou ſcareſt me with dreams. So then, *Job's* meaning is, If I ſhould ſet my ſelf with greateſt intention to forget, that is, to lay aſide the thought of my troubles and ſorrows, and ſay, I will leave off my heavineſs, and complain no more, I will not pore upon my afflictions, but reſolve to be above them, yet it will not be. I find no eaſe: Forgetfulneſs is a medicine for ſome diſeaſes and pains, but I find no cure, no remedy that way, for mine. Whence obſerve,

Miſeriæ memoriam omnem deponam. Dru.

There are ſome things which man can very hardly forget, or get out of his mind.

We may ſtudy their forgetfullneſs, and yet not be able to forget them. And they are of two ſorts. Firſt, Worldly pleaſures. Secondly, Worldly ſorrows. Theſe will not fail to minde us. We need the art, or rather the grace of forgetfullneſs to lay theſe aſide. And there are two things which we are ſlow to remember. Firſt, Our own duties. And ſecondly, The mercies of God. About theſe we need the art, or rather the grace of memory. And uſually they who have moſt neglected to remember duty, are moſt afflicted with the conſtrained remembrance of their own ſorrow. And they ſhall not be able at all to forget the wrath of God, who would not remember the mercies of God. *If I ſay, I will forget my complaint.*

I will leave off my heavineſs, and comfort my ſelf.

פני

Notat faciem, iram etiam et triſtitiam.

Leave off my heavineſs.] The Hebrew word for word, is, *I will lay aſide my face*; for that which ſtrictly, and in the letter of that language, ſignifies the face or countenance of a man, doth alſo ſignifie, Firſt, Anger and Wrath. Secondly, Sorrow and Heavineſs. 'Tis put for anger, *Pſal.* 34. 16. *The face (or anger) of the Lord is againſt ſuch as doe evil.* (*Lam.* 4. 16. *Levit.* 17. 10.) *I will ſet my face*, that is, I will ſhew my anger, and manifeſt my diſpleaſure againſt them.

And the reaſon why that word which ſignifies the countenance or face, ſignifies alſo anger and wrath, ſorrow and heavineſs, is, becauſe both anger and ſorrow break forth in the face. If a man be very angry, you ſhall ſee his anger ſcribled in the uneven character of his countenance: If a man be very heavy and ſorrowfull, you ſhall ſee the lines of ſorrow drawn in his face. Therefore it is ſaid of *Hannah* (1 *Sam.* 1. 18.) when ſhe received a refreſhing and reviving anſwer from the Lord in prayer (the poor ſoul ſate drooping

drooping and mourning, as much as praying, but as soon as she had a hint of audience and acceptance, it is said, *She went away and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad*: the sadness of her heart appeared no more in her countenance, there was fair weather in her face, and Sun-shine in her fore-head, the rain and showers of her tears were blown over and dryed up. As in some sinners, *The shew of their countenance doth testifie against them*, (Isa. 3. 9.) that is, they are so grossely wicked, that you may see sin in their faces, whereas others can keep sin close enough in their hearts, they can keep the disease in, and shut themselves up, when they are sick of the plague of their hearts (1 *King.* 8.) nothing but holiness is discernable in the face of their conversation, when nothing but rottenness and corruption lies at the bottome of their spirits. But as the corruption of many a mans heart breaks forth in botches upon the face of his actions, and the rottenness of his spirit blisters upon his tongue in unsavoury speeches: so those passions and affections of the heart, joy and sorrow, anger and heaviness, appear in the face, and we may read the distempers of the heart in the disguisedness of a look. The face is the *Index* of the heart, that tells you, how things goe within. Therefore *Job* saith, *If I leave off my face*, meaning as we translate, *If I leave off my heaviness*, which is so evident in my face, or which is as easie to be seen as my face; If I resolve to appear chearfull and merry, and will not let clouds darken my countenance any longer, yet, *&c.* The face is put generally for the appearance or out-side of any thing; as we say, the face of the earth, the face of the heavens, the face of the Church, or Common-wealth. So that, *To leave off heaviness, or the face*, is to leave off all shew of heaviness. As *Joseph* left off his tears of joy (*Gen.* 43.30,31.) who, having eased his heart of his joyfull sorrows, by weeping secretly in his chamber *Washed his face, went out and refrained himself.* Thus *Job* would have washed his mournfull tears from his face, he attempted to refrain himself; but he could not, his sorrows were too strong for him; and as he could not remove, so he could not dissemble them. For thir *leaving off*, is to be taken as the precedent act of *forgetting*, for an affected, resolved laying aside. If I make it my business to be chearfull, and *leave off my heaviness, yet* &c. Observe hence,

Cordis index vultus, totusq; homo est in facie.

Nomen faciei in Scriptura significat exteriorem habitum, sicut facies terræ cœli reip. Bold.

Latina vox facies significat non solum os oculos genas, sed formam omnem, modum et fabturam totius corporis, a faciendo dictam. Aul. Gel.

Sorrow is not easily shaken off.

Sorrow sticks close. It is very hard for a man to play

the hypocrite with his sorrow, or dissemble the sadness of h heart, but it is far harder to be really delivered of it. Sorrow is a companion that will not be cast off with a word. A man may more easily cover his sin, then his sorrow. Many can put a visour of holiness upon their faces, when nothing but wickedness is in their hearts; but it is not easie to make a shew of comfort, when nothing but sorrow is in the heart. Grief will out. *Heaviness in the heart, is like the ointment in the right hand*, of which *Solomon* speaks (*Prov.* 27.16.) *that it bewrayeth it self*. One said of a merry *Atheist*, *He laugheth to thee and to me*; that is, he seems to laugh, but he mourns to himself, the mans heart is heavy. If it be not so, yet it may be so with all wicked men, when they are merriest in the face, they have reason to have sorrow even unto death in their hearts: it is a hard thing (I say) to put sorrow out of the face, much more to get it out of the heart; when it is lodged there once, it will not soon be dispossess'd. The Apostle (*Heb.* 12. 1.) exhorts, *To lay aside every weight, and to cast off the sin that doth so easily beset us*; he means it of the sin of nature, which we bear about us; this sin (saith he) doth easily beset us, but let us cast it off, that is, let us study and strive to lay aside this heaviness of sin which is the truest cause of the heaviness of sorrow. One would think that a man needs not much perswasion, when he hath any heavy burthen upon his shoulders, to lay it aside; yet (so it is) man can hardly be perswaded to lay aside this burthen, and it is the business we have with your souls every day, to perswade you to lay it aside. *It is a weight that easily besets us.* Now as we need much exhortation to cast off the weight of this sin, which is so pleasing, so also of sorrow, though it be unpleasant. When sorrow besets us, it leaves us without ease, but sorrow easily besets us. *Job* found it a hard task to lay aside his burden. Because his friends thought he fed too much upon his afflictions, therefore he tryed what he could doe, but it would not doe. *If I say, I will leave off my heaviness, I will comfort my self*, &c. See the issue by and by.

I will comfort my self.

Comfort is the very life of our lives, the spring of our year, the light of our day, the Sun in our firmament, the complement of mercy: and therefore Christ gives his Church the sum of all mercy, in that one promise of sending the Comforter. The Hebrew בלג

brew word signifies to strengthen, because when a man is cast down with sorrows his spirit is weakned, *Comfort is the repair of strength, If I say, I will comfort*, that is, corroborate and strengthen my self (Psal. 39. 13.) *O spare me* (saith *David*) *that I may recover my strength*; or that I may a little comfort my self: The Septuagint renders it, *That I may get my life again*, that I may be enlivened, and re-insouled, or fetch back my soul again. Here, if I say I will comfort my self, *Take heart at grass* (as we say) and play the man, then my sorrows renew upon me.

Roboravit, confortavit, vires collegit. Sept. ἀναζώγω.

But some may object; how is it that *Job* takes upon him to *comfort himself?* Is it any wonder if *Job* came short of comfort, when he went to himself for comfort?

Comfort is not a commodity to be found in the hand or power of any creature; the geeat God hath all that in his own hand; if any man will have comfort, he must trade to heaven for it. It is the honour of God to be called, *The God of all comfort* (2 Cor. 1. 3.) that is, the God who hath all comfort at his dispose. As some Kings have a denomination from the great staple commodities of their Kingdomes. Our King is called, *The King of the wooll*, because wooll is the chief commodity, and more plentifull here, then in any other Country of the world. Another is called, *King of the Wines*: *and another, of the flax. Comfort is the staple commodity of heaven*; and God is called, *The God of all comfort*, not only because the chiefest and best comforts are in his hand, but because there is not the least imaginable comfort to be had out of his hand. He hath the monopoly of comfort, or rather the sole-gift of comfort. We can trouble and perplex our selves, but God only can comfort us. And *he is the God of all comfort*, of all sorts and of all degrees of comfort: the God, not only of spirituall, but of worldly comfort, of temporall comfort, as well as of eternal. As the joyes of the holy Ghost are in his hand, so are the joyes of civil relations; the joy of meat and drink, the joy of riches and honour are in his hand also, How then saith *Job*. *I will lay aside my heavinesse. I will comfort my self*? It is a hard thing to comfort others (*Luther* said, *It is as easie a work to raise the dead, as to comfort the conscience*) but it is harder for a man to comfort himself. *Eliphaz* gave testimony to *Job* in the fourth Chapter (*vers.* 3, 4.) that he had *upholden him that was falling, and had strengthned the feeble knees. But now it is come upon thee, and thou fainteſt; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.* Thou, who hast

haſt holpen others, canſt not help thy ſelf. Yet here *Job* was upon a reſolve to comfort himſelf.

I anſwer, though it be a truth, that no man is able to comfort himſelf, no more then he can convert himſelf; and that a man is no more able to change his heart from ſorrow to joy, then he is able to change his heart from ſin to grace; yet, a man may attempt or aſſay, he may uſe means to comfort himſelf. When *Job* ſaith, *I will comfort my ſelf*, the meaning is, I will do the utmoſt I can, *I* will not be behind in my endeavours, I will take the beſt courſe, and improve all opportunities to get out of theſe dumps; whoſoever will preſcribe me a way, or direct me to a remedy of theſe ſorrows, I will ſubmit to it, *I will comfort my ſelf*. From whence note, That

What a man really endeavoureth to do, that he may be ſaid to do.

I will comfort my ſelf; Why? Becauſe though he were not able to attain ſuch an end (Joy and comfort lye beyond the line of the creature) yet he reached at it, he attempted, and aſſayed all means to comfort himſelf. Thus the ſalvation of a man is aſcribed to himſelf; a man is ſaid to ſave himſelf, though ſalvation belongeth to the Lord, even temporal ſalvation, but eſpecially eternall ſalvation, yet, a man may be ſaid to ſave himſelf; as the Apoſtle (1 *Epiſt.* 4. 16.) exhorts *Timothy* to walk by a holy rule, to ſettle himſelf in his ſtudies, to read the Scriptures, and to meditate in them, to be faithfull in diſpenſing of the Goſpel, aſſuring him, *If thou doſt theſe things, thou ſhalt both ſave thy ſelf, and them that hear thee. Save thy ſelf.* No man can be his *own Saviour*; he may be as well his *own Creator*. *Timothy* was thus encouraged, becauſe in ſo doing, he did all that a man ought, who expects ſalvation. That was the way to, though not the cauſe of ſalvation. *Salvation is all Chriſts, yet he who doth his beſt to ſave himſelf, may be ſaid to ſave himſelf.* Thus alſo a man comforts himſelf, converts himſelf, inſtructs himſelf, when he putteth out to the utmoſt of gifts, graces, and opportunities to doe or attain duties and bleſſings. *No man* (ſaith the Prophet) *doth ſtir himſelf up to take hold of the Lord.* The word in the Prophet ſignifies to awake, or to watch; no man wakes or watches his opportunity to take hold of the Lord. It notes alſo that action of old birds, who flutter with their wings, and beat up their young ones, to urge and provoke them to uſe their wings, and flye abroad. Thus he complained becauſe the

lazy

lazy, dull hearted Jews did not raise up and waken their hearts to doe what they could, though to doe it was more then they could.

Secondly, Observe, *That a man in affliction may help on his comforts or his sorrows.*

I will comfort my self, I will leave off my heaviness. Some add to their afflictions, and are active to aggravate and encrease them: they make their night darker, and obscure the light of counsell that is brought unto them: they joyn with Satan their enemy, and by the black melancholly vapours of their own hearts, stifle the consolations that are administred them by faithfull friends. Like *Rachel* (Jer. 31.) *they refuse to be comforted*; when reviving cordialls are offered, they spill them upon the ground, and will not take in a drop: they are so far from comforting themselves, that they will not receive comfort from others. The Prophet seems to be resolved upon the point, he would go on in sorrows, *Look away from me, I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me* (*Isa.* 22.4.) As sometimes a man under great affliction bespeaks comfort from others, O, *I* am in a sad case, come, comfort me, shew me how I may get ease from these sorrows. Many beg prayers, and send bills of their afflictions, desiring to have them spread before the Lord in the Congregation, that some comfort may be dropt from heaven into their diseased bodies, or wounded spirits. Others sleight prayers, and care not to be comforted, as if it were an ease to them to mourn, and a refreshing to be in heaviness. There is a twofold ground upon which comforts are thus put off.

1 Some put off their comforts upon sullenness of spirit; black and dark spirits love to bathe themselves in sorrow. *Sorrow is the bath of drooping spirits*; and it is Satans bath too. Melancholly is commonly called, *The devils bath*; he takes delight to wash in the streams of our unnecessary tears. Sorrow for sin puts the devil to the greatest sorrow. Godly grief is a grief to Satan: but he delighteth in our worldly sorrows, as the devil may be delighted: if he have delight in any thing, this is one thing he delights in, our forbidden sorrows. Some sorrows are as much forbidden as any pleasures. The devil is as much pleased with our unlawful sorrows, as he is with our unlawfull pleasures. And he labours as much to make us pleased with them.

2. Others help on their own sorrows, and lessen their comforts through

through forgetfulness or ignorance; they (as the Apostle chides the *Hebrews*, *Chap.* 12. 5.) have forgotten the exhortation, which speaks unto them as unto children. Now, as wicked men rejoyce, because they forget or know not their ill condition: So godly men are sad, when they forget or know not how good their condition is. Yet *Job* supposes the review of his good estate, would neither check his sorrows, nor establish his peace, *If I say, I will forget my complaint, I will comfort my self, I am afraid of all my sorrows.*

Thirdly, Observe, *Man is not able to comfort himself*; we can make our selves crosses, but we cannot make our selves comforts. A man may say, as *Job* did (*Chap.* 7. 13.) to his bed, comfort me; or to his riches; comfort me, or to his wine and good chear, comfort me; or to his friends, comfort me: He may say to all outward acts of pleasure, to merry company, and musick, comfort me; yea a Saint may say to his graces and holiness, comfort me; and yet none of these can comfort him, or, they comfort him in vain. To seek comfort any where but in Christ, is to seek the living among the dead. Christ is comfort clothed in our flesh, and he is the comfort of our spirits. Till he gives comfort, every man must conclude, as *Job*, I *am afraid of all my sorrows*:

יגר
Timuit, expavit præ metu se abstrahere timorem denotat imminentis calamitatis.

I am afraid.

עצב
Significat dolore afficere, & interdum figurare.

The word signifies strong trembling, and shaking fear.

Qui materiam aliquam, ut lutum vel ceram fingunt manibus et digitis, is illam premendo quasi dolore afficit. Bold. *Est elegans metaphora; verba aliquis figurare, nam qui verba detorquet aliam figuram, i. e. significationem dat tribuit.*

Of all my sorrows.

The root hath a double signification. First, To afflict with grief (Isa. 63. 10.) *They vexed his holy Spirit.* Secondly, To fashion or form a thing (Job 10. 8.) *Thy hands have made me and fashioned me round about.* The same word by a Metaphor signifies both to greive and to fashion, to vex and to form, because a man that forms & fashions a piece of wood or stone, seems to put it to pain by cutting and hewing. And he that forms wax, vexes and chafes it in his hands. Thus I say, because of the fashioning of a thing, a man doth bruise, cut, and (as it were) put it to pain, therefore the same word signifies both to vex or greive, and to form or fashion. And this word is applyed unto the ill usuage of words (Psal. 56. 5.) *Every day* (saith *David*, speaking of his enemies) *they wrest my words*; or they put my words to pain, and grief, or they painfully and grievously wrest my words. *Davids* enemies took up what he spake, and put a new shape upon it, and this they

they did so vexingly, that they are said to wrest his words; a thing is vexed, when it is wrested, or wrought quite out of the form it before had. The same Metaphor the Apostle *Peter* useth in reference to Doctrine, 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. speaking of the Epistles of *Paul*, in which *are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest*, or put upon the rack; they painfully form his words, and represent them in a meaning which he never intended. What is spoken may be right, both in the matter and intendment of the speaker, yet another wrests, forms, and fashions it in his own mould, and makes it bear a sense which the speaker never dream'd of.

In this Text we have the *Noun* only, which importeth either the labour or pains, which a man taketh, or the pain and grief which a man feeleth. Hence in the Hebrew this word signifies an *Idol*, and both acceptions fall into the reason of it.

First, because Idols are made, fashioned, and formed up curiously, with a great deal of art and labour: the wax or clay, or stone, is put to pain; you must cut it and carve it to make an Idol.

Secondly, Because Idols are served, attended and worshipped with much pain and grief. False worship, or the worship of Idols, is alwayes more servile and painfull then true worship is. False worship is a painfull service, a servile service, a toyl rather then a worship; but the service of the true and everliving God is, an holy, an ingenious, a noble and an honourable service. Idols are troublesome, both in their making and in their worshipping. From this twofold interpretation of the word, I find a two-fold translation given.

First, Thus, *I am afraid of all my works*, as if *Job*, having a design to comfort himself in a reflection upon his good works, and former holy walkings, feared they would not serve his turn, or bear up his spirit in the evil day, which was come upon him. As if he had said; *I have lived as exactly by the rule of the word as I could; I have had respect to all the Commandements of God, that I might not sin against him. Yet I am afraid of all my works, the anger of God will surely soak thorow them all, or find holes or breaches in them to come in upon me at.* *Verebar omnia opera mea* Vulg.

Thus he is conceived reasoning with himself. But doubtless it was not *Jobs* meaning to look to the innocency or holiness of his life past, as the ground of his present comfort; he that would do so, may justly be afraid of all his works. When we see the best of

our ſelves, we have more reaſon to be afraid, then to be comforted. As we muſt work out our ſalvation with fear and trembling, ſo we have cauſe to fear and tremble at our works.

But rather as we tranſlate, *I am afraid of all my ſorrows*; that is, I no ſooner endeavour to comfort my ſelf, but preſently my ſorrows throng about me, they appear before my face, and make ſuch a gaſhly apparition, that *I* am afraid. Sorrows charge and aſſault me afreſh, when *I* am purpoſing to make an eſcape from the hands of ſorrow. When I think of leaving off my heavineſs, or of getting out of the ſight of it, ſorrows come upon me with greater violence then before. While a priſoner is quiet and content with his reſtraint, the keeper layes no great reſtraint upon him; but if he perceive him meditating an eſcape, or attempting to break priſon, and ſet himſelf at liberty, preſently more irons are clapt upon him, and an advantage taken even to load him with chains. Such hard uſage even this poor priſoner feared at the hand of his ſorrows, *If I ſay, I will leave off my heavineſs, I will throw off my bolts and fetters, and get out of theſe troubles, I am afraid of all my ſorrows*; *I* ſhall have all the Keepers and Jaylers about me, they will lay more load upon me, and watch me more ſtrictly then before: You tell me I am in love with my ſorrows, the truth is, fears of ſorrow incompaſs me round about, *I am afraid of all my ſorrows*.

Note hence: First, this general truth,

That affliction is matter of fear.

Natural fear ariſes from the apprehenſion of ſome approaching evil; and as fear grows more boiſterous and inordinate, ſo it repreſents us with ſadder (though but ſuppoſed) evils.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A godly man may be much oppreſt with the fear of afflictions.*

When I would comfort my ſelf, I am afraid of all my ſorrows: it is terrible to me to think that they ſtill encreaſe upon me, and that whileſt *I* hope to eſcape, *I* am more enſnared. Chriſt himſelf, when he was in our nature, and cloathed with our fleſh, was afraid of all his ſorrows: he was *a man of ſorrows*, and he was afraid of his ſorrows too, *Matth.* 26. 38. He ſaid, *My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful even unto death; and he offered up prayers and ſupplications with ſtrong cryes and tears unto him that was able to ſave him from death, and was heard in that he feared* (Heb. 5.) His were extraordinary ſorrows indeed, ſuch as no creature ever felt or taſted. The

Cup of sorrow which he drank was mixed and tempered with all our sorrows, and with the cause of them, our sins. This was it he feared, being in our nature; though as that nature was hypostatically united unto the divine nature, *it* had infinitely more power to bear all those sorrows, then we have in our nature to bear the least sorrow. Now, if Christ himself in our flesh was afraid of his sorrows, which yet he knew he should overcome, how much more may the fear of sorrows overcome us, while we are in the flesh?

Lastly, Observe, *That the fear of afflictions assaults and oppresses some most, when they set themselves most to conquer and overcome them.*

I, saith *Job*, *would comfort myself, but I am afraid of all my sorrows*; I fear they will be doubled and trebled upon me, therefore I had rather sit still, then by striving to unloose, straiten the cords of my affliction faster upon me. The next clause seems to hint this as a reason, why his sorrows hung so close upon him.

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.

But how did *Job* know this? As God said to *Adam* (Gen. 3. 11.) *Who told thee that thou wast naked?* So I may say to *Job*, who told thee that God would not hold thee innocent? Or, where hadst thou this assurance of thy condemnation? The Saints may know, or be assured that God will pardon them; but a wicked man cannot know, or be assured that God will not. This knowledge of *Job* was but a suspition or at the most a conjecture. And the giving out of this conjecture was but the language of his fear, his faith could say no such thing, for God had no where said it, *The best men speak sometimes from their worser part.* Their graces may be silent a while, and leave corruption to have all the talk. When the flesh is under great pain, the spirit is hindred from acting its part, and then sense gets the mastery over faith. Had it not been upon such a disadvantage, *Job* had never offended with his tongue, by saying he knew what he could not know.

לא תנקני
à radice נקה
Purus, mundus, per metaphoram innocens, insons.

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.

The word which we translate *innocent*, cometh from a root which signifieth pure and clean, and in the verb to cleanse and make pure: And because innocency is the purity or cleanness of a person, therefore the same word signifies to cleanse, and to

hold or make innocent: in which ſenſe it is uſed frequently, *Ex.* 20. 2. *Thou wilt not hold him guiltleſs* (or innocent) *that taketh thy Name in vain.* The counſel that *David* gave upon his death-bed unto *Solomon* concerning *Joab*, was, *Therefore hold thou him not innocent*, or guiltleſs (1 *King.* 2. 9.) that is, let the bloud which he hath ſhed be upon him, let his honour and his name continue ſtained and blemiſhed in thy thoughts and judgement, *Hold him not innocent.*

Here the Queſtion is, To what antecedent we are to refer the relative, *Thou? I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent*; Thou, who?

There are two opinions about it. Some refer it to God, and ſome to *Bildad*, to whom *Job* maketh anſwer in this place.

They that refer it unto God, make out the ſenſe thus. Either, firſt, taking the word properly for cleanſing and healing the ſores and wounds which were upon his body; *I know thou wilt not cleanſe my body from this filthineſs, from theſe diſeaſes that now annoy me*: And ſo it is in anſwer to the words of *Bildad*, telling *Job*, that in caſe he ſought unto God, and humbled himſelf before him, he would awaken for him, and remove thoſe judgements. No, ſaith *Job*, when I think of eaſe and deliverance, all my fears return upon me, and I know God will not yet cleanſe, eaſe, or deliver me from them.

Adverſus illud quod omnes ſtatuunt, probos, videlicet, etiam caſtigatos nunquam ſuccidi, hoc pro certo ſtatuam, ô Deus, nunquam eſſe me ab iſtis quibus totus ſcateo fœdiſſimis ulceribus ac vermibus repurgandum. Bez.

Novi quod non ſis me liberum dimiſſurus. Coc.

Non mundabis, i. e. *purum, juſtum, vel etiam innocentem non declarabis.*

Again, Taking it tropically (as we render it) for a judiciall cleanſing or purification; ſo, *Thou wilt not hold me innocent*, is as much as this, Lord, ſuch ſorrows and troubles are upon me, that I fear thou wilt not declare, or pronounce, or give teſtimony concerning me to the world, that I am an innocent perſon. Becauſe the ſores and troubles upon him, were as an evidence againſt him in the judgememt of his friends, that he was a wicked perſon, therefore (ſaith he) Lord, I am afraid, *Thou wilt not hold me*, that is, *Thou wilt not declare me to be innocent*, by taking away theſe evils, that ſo this opinion of my friends concerning me may be removed or confuted.

From this ſenſe note:

First, *That even a godly man in deep afflictions may have miſgiving thoughts of God.*

The ſoul miſgives ſometimes about the pardon of ſin, and is even ſwallowed up with deſpair, concluding, *I know God will*

not

not hold me innocent, he will not be reconciled unto me, or blot out my transgression.

But especially (which is rather the mind of *Job*) the soul misgives about releasefrom punishment. Some being hamper'd in the bands of affliction, conclude, God will never let them loose, or set them at liberty again. Such a conclusion *Davids* unbelief made against himself, *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*, (1 Sam. 27. 1.) When *Jonah* was cast into the deep, in the midst of the seas, when the flouds compassed him, and all the billows and waves passed over him, then he said, *Chap.* 2. 4. *I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes*. Indeed *Jonah* began to recover quickly, his next words being a breath of faith, *Yet I will look again toward thy holy Temple.*

Secondly, Observe, *That untill fear of guilt be removed, fear of troubles will not remove.*

Job was not very clear about the pardon of his sins; somewhat stuck upon his spirit, while he was under the clouds and darkness of this temptation; therefore he saith, *I am afraid of all my sorrows*. Till the soul is setled in the matter of pardon, or freedome from guilt, it can never be setled about freedome from punishment. Hence the Apostle (*Heb.* 2. 10. 15.) speaking of the Saints before the coming of Christ, calls Christ, the Captain of our salvation, and assures us, he took flesh, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and *deliver those who through fear of death, were all their life time subject unto bondage.* The language is very near this of the Text, *I am afraid of all my sorrows.* As *Job* was in bondage under his afflictions through the fear of his returning sorrows: So, *they were all their life time subject unto bondage*, through the fear of approaching death. All the Saints before the coming of Christ were under such a bondage, for the Apostle speaks as of a generall state, *That he might deliver those, who through the fear of death, were all their life time subject unto bondage.* The reason hereof, was, because they had not so manifest and convincing a light concerning the pardon of sin, the freeness of grace, and the abundance of that mercy which was brought in afterwards, and revealed by Jesus Christ, when he actually made our attonement by the blood of his Cross: for howsoever it is undeniable, that the faithfull under the old Testament, had knowledge of that satisfaction which was to be made by the Mediatour for the removing of sin, and the taking away

away of guilt (every sacrifice spake this, shewing that there was an atonement to be made by some other blood, which the blood of the sacrifice typified) yet notwithstanding there was not a clearing and a quieting of their hearts, because Christ (though in the promise slain from the beginning of the world) was not actually slain, nor offered up for sinners. The Apostle (*Heb.* 10. 1, 2.) argues upon the same point, That the Law with *those Sacrifices, could not make the comers thereunto perefect*, that is, it could not assure the heart that sin was taken away, *for if it could, then* (saith he) *the sacrifices should not have needed to be offered up so often*. What needed any repetition, seeing they who were once so purged should have had no more *conscience of sin*, that is, sin should never have troubled and vexed their consciences any more? But *now Christ by one offering hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified* (verse 14.) that is, he hath made a perfect satisfaction for them; and compleated the peace of their consciences. So then, while there remaineth any scruple about sin, fears of evil will hang upon the spirit. And we find that the old Saints were very fearfull of outward afflictions, because they had as it were a relish or taste of the disfavour and displeasure of God in them. And in proportion, as any of them had more or less of free grace appearing to them, so they were more or less enthralled with these fears. We may observe throughout the old Testament, that there was not such a spirit of rejoycing in sufferings and afflictions, as we find breakings forth in the new. *Paul* never saith, *I am afraid of all my sorrows*; No, he saith, *As sorrowfull, yet alwayes rejoycing*. You never hear him complain of his afflictions. He indeed complains of his corruptions, *O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death*! But he never said, *O miserable man, how am I afflicted, I am in deaths often, who shall deliver me from this death of the body*! We find the Saints under the Gospel clothed with a spirit of exultation and rejoycing, of which we hear little, if any thing at all under the Law: The want of which we are to ascribe to their want of a clear light about the removing of guilt, and pardon of sin. *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent.*

Thirdly, observe, *That God often deals with his best servants in regard of outward troubles, as if they were guilty.*

I know thou wilt not hold me innocent; that is, thou wilt not deal with me as with an innocent person. As the Lord dealt with his Son,

Son, so he deals with his servants. God the Father dealt with Jesus Christ as with a guilty person (*Isa.* 53.9, 12.) He was *numbred among transgressours, and made his grave with the wicked.* The Lord reckoned him as a sinner, while he was satisfying his justice for sin, and making an atonement for sinners. *Job* is no where called a type of Christ, but he was like him, and their parallel might be drawn in many things, especially in this, that both were numbred with the wicked, and in that both were used, as if they had been guilty. The dispensations of God to his own beloved Son once did, and to his faithfull servants often do look like those to the greatest transgressours. His Son was handled, so that he might redeem sinners; his servants are so handled, sometimes to prevent, often to purge them from sin; sometimes to try their graces, alwayes to make them fitter vessels for glory. Though we cannot make any earnings toward glory, by the weightiest afflictions, yet *these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternall weight of glory.*

I shall pass from this reference of the word, *Thou*, when I have breifly vindicated the text from the corruptions of some Papists, who urge it to prove the uncertainty of our justification. *Job* (say they) doubted whether God would declare him just or no. I answer, Justified persons may have doubts, yet that doth not argue the uncertainty of justification. Justification is a sure act in it self, and we may be sure of it, though some are unsetled about it. This Scripture gives no shelter, much less support, to that doctrine of doubting. The Vulgar reading, grossely varying from the original, is all the shadow it hath in this place. For as that Translatour mistakes the former clause which he renders, *I am afraid of all my works*: So this latter, which he renders, *Knowing that thou wilt not pardon or spare him that offendeth.* He that seeks to be justified by his works, shall not want fears about his justification: and if this be a truth, which their translation seem to hold forth, that God will not pardon him that offendeth, the best and holiest men in the world have reason, not only to fear whether they are justified, but to resolve they can never be justified in his sight. If every man that sinneth must doubt of the pardon of sin, all men must doubt. In that common acception of the word *offend*, it is false, that God will not pardon him that offends: whom should he pardon but such as offend? They who are above sin, are above pardon. *Job* never thought God would not pardon

Bellarm. *l.* 5. *de justif. cap.* 5.

Sciens quod non parcerès delinquenti. Vulg.

pardon him because he had sinned, it being one of the Royal Titles of God, *The God pardoning iniquity transgression and sin.* But if we take sinning or offending in a stricter sense, as it imports a man obstinate and still engaged with delight to sin (in which sense the next Title of the Lords great name, after, *Forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin*, is to be understood, *And that will by no means clear the guilty* (Exod. 34 7.) The Hebrew is, *And that clearing will not clear.* We supply the word *guilty*; which the *Chaldee* well explains by this periphrasis, *Him that will not convert, or turn to the Lord)* such offenders the Lord will not pardon. But to say that the Lord will not spare and pardon such guilty persons, such delinquents, as will not return unto him, but go on to add one wickedness to another, is no deniall of the Saints assurance of pardon, they being already turned and converted to the Lord. So much for that clause, as the antecedent refers unto God, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent.*

But rather take the *antecedent* to be *Bildad. I know, thou Bildad, wilt not hold me innocent*; as if *Job* had said, *When I think of comforting my self, my wounds bleed afresh, and my sorrows present themselves to my thoughts again, by the sight of which I am assured I shall not be judged innocent by thee, but rather more wicked, as my sorrows appear to be more; for seeing thou art resolved to conclude the multitude of my sins from the multitude of my sufferings, in vain shall I labour to shew and approve my self as an innocent person before thee, when as I shall still be an afflicted person before thee; I know thou canst not hold me innocent, while abiding afflictions lead thy judgement to conclude that a man is wicked. How shall I being in trouble gain any credit of integrity, in thy opinion, so long as outward troubles render me a hypocrite in thy opinion?*

In vanum laborabo ut ostendam tibi afflictum simul & innocentem me esse posse. Bol.

I shall note only this from it, *He that judgeth of a mans innocency by his outward estate, may for ever condemn an innocent. Bildad* judged so of *Job*, this caused *Job* to say, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent*, or think me good, seeing evils are still upon me, and are like to continue upon me still. *Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgement*, is the rule of Christ (*John* 7. 24.) as if they could hardly judge what is right, who judge by what appears. We must not judge of things till they appear; nor may we judge of persons by their appearance. As oftentimes in holiness, so sometime in sinfullness, men are not what they seem to be. All is not gold that glisters, and some gold doth not glister:

glister: Many are not that in holiness, which they seem to be by their actings toward God; and some are not in sinfulness, what they seem to be by Gods acting toward them. It is easier to do good, then to be good; and usually they who are good suffer that which is evil.

Verse 29. *If I be wicked, Why then labour I in vain?*

These words may be connected with either of the interpretations given upon the former verse, *I know thou* (O God) or thou (O *Bildad*) *wilt not hold me innocent.* Now then,

If I be wicked, &c.

The Original word hath been heretofore opened. Only note, that the Hebrew is absolute, and not by way of supposition, plainly thus, *I am wicked*, or, *I shall be accounted wicked, Why therefore labour I in vain?* Or, now therefore I labour in vain. When *Job* saith, *I am wicked*, it is not as if he gave the cause, and assented to his friends, Ye have had an ill opinion of me all this while, now I begin to have as ill an opinion of my self, *I am wicked.* No, he means it only thus, I am handled or accounted as a wicked man, *I am wicked*, in your thoughts, and the providence of God seems to give you occasion of thinking so, ye look upon me, as if I were a wicked man, and I look like one, *Why then labour I in vain?*

אובי ארשע *Ego impius. Impius hoc loco non qui sit, sed qui ut improbus tractetur, vel qui impius videatur, & liquet Jobum suis amicis Impium fuisse visum ut qui in hoc Christum præferret, quò cum impijs reputatus fuit.* Fr. Joh.

Why labour I *in vain?*

יגע *Laboravit, defatigatus fuit, Græco κοπιᾶν respondet, & notat ex labore summam molestiam.*

The word signifies hardest labour; why do I travel so painfully to vindicate my self, and to stand fair in your eyes? It is labouring with toile, or moiling labour, answerable to that Greek word (κοπιάω) which signifies sore and extreame labour. It is too much to bestow any labour in vain (that is, without fruit or success) much more to bestow hard and sore labour.

להבל

הבל *pro* ματην. Aquil.

But what was this sore, hard and painful labour? He means all those labours which he bestowed, either to extricate himself from his sufferings, or to clear himself from their prejudice of his sinfulness, because he suffered, as if he had said in particulars.

Why do I *labour* in Apologues to excuse my self? Or in arguments defend my cause? VVhy do I labour in prayer to deprecate these troubles, and get out of the bands of my afflictions? Pleading for our selves with men, in hard labour, but especiall plead-

ing for our ſelves with God. Prayer is ſtrong labour, therefore it is called *wreſtling*: *Bildad* adviſed *Job* to pray unto God, in the 8*th*. Chapter; here *Job* ſeems to anſwer, *Why labour I in prayer*, and in ſeeking unto God, ſeeing all's in vain, and loſt labour? to what end ſhould I labour in any of theſe duties, *for I am wicked* (in the opinion of man) or, *if I be wicked*, in the ſight of God, or ſeeing God hath caſt me into ſuch a condition, as appearingly and viſibly caſts me among the wicked.

For the better underſtanding of this, we may conſider the words, as an argument by way of *Dilemma*, *If I be wicked*, *Why then labour I in vain? If I waſh my ſelf with Snow-water*, &c. As if he had ſaid, Either I am wicked, or I am clean and pure; If I am wicked (as you ſay I am) I deſerve more puniſhment, then I labour in vain to be eaſed of this. If I am pure and clean, as waſhed with Snow-water, what will the iſſue be? God will yet caſt me into the ditch of affliction; ſo that I am between two walls, hemmed in on both ſides: *Wickedneſs would certainly ruine me, and my righteouſneſs will not deliver me; Why therefore do ye feed me with vain hopes that I ſhall be delivered, if I were righteous?* So *Bildad* aſſured him in the former Chapter.

More particularly, *If I am wicked, Why then labour I in vain?*

Si vitæ præteritæ laboribus & pietatis ſtudio ſanctitatem non comparavi, neq; coram Deo juſtus habeor, certe labor meus inanis fuit. Aquin.

First, Some interpret his words as a conteſt with God; Thus; if by my ſtudy of holineſs, and care to walk circumſpectly in thy wayes, I have not yet gained the reputation of holineſs; If I cannot yet paſs in thy account for a godly man, ſurely I ſhall ſtill labour in vain about that point, as hitherto I have done.

Si autem & ſic impius ſum fruſtra laboravi, i. e. ſi impius ſum, ut vos de me dicitis. Vul.

But ſecondly (for I lay this aſide) Others thus, *If I am wicked*, it is a vain thing for me to ſeek the Lord, as you adviſe me. Why will you put me upon a buſineſs, which will be fruitleſs and without ſucceſs? It was the word of God in *Jobs* time, though no Scripture, *That God heareth not Sinners*: Not ſuch ſinners as *Jobs* friends challenged him to be. So *Job* ſeems to compare their opinion of him, and counſel given him thus together; your opinion of me is, that I am a wicked man; your counſel to me is, that I ſhould ſeek unto God: Surely, your opinion of me, and your councel to me can never agree, for if I am wicked (as you hold me to be) I labour in vain, while I obey your councel.

There is a ſenſe, wherein it is in vain for a wicked man to ſeek unto God, and a ſence wherein it is not in vain for a wicked man to ſeek unto God: we muſt diſtinguiſh of this interpretation.

If

If a man be wicked, it is in vain for him to seek unto God, while he loveth wickedness and delighteth in it. *Psal.* 66. 2 *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer.* He that is wicked, as to love wickedness, prayes in vain, fasts and humbles his soul in vain. *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*, that is, the Lord abominates his sacrifice, but, *The prayer of the upright is his delight.* *Solomon* describes an hypocrite in the former words: he is one that will pray and offer sacrifice, and yet puts the *stumbling block of his iniquity before his face* (Ezek. 14. 4.) So they (*Jer.* 7. 4.) cried, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these*; The Prophet discovers, who these *zealous Templers* were, *vers.* 9. *Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsly, and then come and stand in this house, which is called by my Name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?* Some mingle prayer and fasting with stealing and murdering: such praying and fasting, are as unacceptable to God, as stealing and murdering are: Such labouring to please the Lord, is displeasing to the Lord. *What hast thou to do (saith God to the wicked) to take my Covenant in thy mouth* (Psal. 50. 16.) Doth God say to the wicked, What hast thou to do with my Covenant? For whom is the Covenant made, but for the wicked? If men were not wicked or sinful, what needed there a Covenant of Grace? The Covenant is for the wicked. And the Covenant brings grace enough to pardon those who are most wicked; why then doth the Lord say to the wicked, *What hast thou to do to take my Covenant into thy mouth?* Observe what follows, and his meaning is expounded, *Seeing thou hatest to be reformed*; As if God had said, Thou wicked man, who protectest thy sin, und holdest it close, refusing to return, and hating to reform; what hast thou to do to meddle with my Covenant? *Lay off thy defiled hands. He that is resolved to hold his sin, takes hold of the Covenant in vain, or rather he lets it go, while he seems to hold it.* VVoe unto those who sue for mercy, while they neglect duty. Thus a wicked man labours in vain.

But there is a sense in which a wicked man doth not labour in vain, how wicked soever he is. VVhat else means the Prophets invitation (Isa. 55. 5.) *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Let him forsake his wayes, and then no matter what his

wayes have been, let him return to the Lord, and then his former departures shall not hinder acceptance. *Christ died for the ungodly*, *Rom.* 5. 6. and *God justifieth the ungodly*, Rom. 4. 5. It is not in vain for an ungodly man to come to God indeed, and when he doth, he ceases to be ungodly. They draw nigh only with their lips, whose hearts are not changed, and they draw nigh in vain. *As God hath not said to the seed of Jacob* (real Saints) *Seek ye me in vain.* So he hath not said in vain to wicked men, *Seek ye my face.* For with the word which bids them seek, he gives them power to seek, and the mercy they seek for. The grace of God prevents us, that we may seek him, and blesses us when we do seek him. If all who are wicked labour in vain, then all had laboured in vain, forasmuch as all were wicked.

Si odhuc mecũ ogit Deus tanquam cum impio, quo sum frustra laborem? Philip. *Hæc sunt verba hominũ à Deo derelicti.* Vatabl.

Thirdly, You may take the meaning of it thus, *If I am wicked*; that is, if I am reputed by men, and still afflicted by God, as a wicked man, then why should I labour in vain, or trouble my self any further to so little purpose? If this sence may be admitted 'tis a passionate speech proceeding from impatience and distempe, of spirit: Much like that of *David*, and very near it in words *Psal.* 73. 13. *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency, for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastned every morning.* *Davids* afflictions wrought as hard conclusions in him, as *Jobs* did. *Grace acts and speaks ever like it self, but a gracious man doth not.* *David* shewed there was vanity and remainders of defilement in his heart, by saying, *I have cleansed my heart in vain.* Mr. *Broughton* renders to this sense, *I shall be holden as wicked, now why do I labour in vain?* Hence observe,

That where hope faileth, endeavour faileth too.

I have no hope, saith *Job*, to get out of these afflictions, which fall upon wicked men, or to get one step beyond a wicked man in your reputation, my labour is in vain, why then do I labour? When the heart sinks, the hands hang down. Where the one gives over believing, and hopeing, the other gives over acting and working. Hence the afflicted are called upon by the Apostle, *to lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees* (Heb. 12. 12.) Hands and knees are the instruments of action and motion; and the hanging down of these imports both retarded or stopt. Those afflicted *Hebrews* saw little or no hope of deliverance, therefore they gave over endeavouring and moving after deliverance.

Lastly,

Lastly, Taking the words (as in the original) absolutely, without any supposition, *I am wicked, Why then labour* I *in vain?* As if he had said, I *am wicked, not only in the opinion of men, but* I *acknowledge my self to be wicked indeed, considered with the most holy God*; and then his sence is, Lord, if thou art pleased to go this way to work with me, to set the rigour of thy justice awork, to find out my sin, and to judge me according to what thou findest, then in vain do I seek to comfort my self, for in thy sight no flesh can be justified, I (as well as others) *am wicked.* In which acknowledgment he seems to meet with, and confute that supposition of *Bildad*, Chap. 8. 6. *If thou wert pure*; Pure, saith *Job*, alas, I can never be pure before God. When the Lord examines my purity, he will find it impurity. You tell me, if I were pure, the Lord would awaken for me, I shall never be pure in your sense, I am as pure as ever I shall be, that is, I am impure, and shall be at my best: which sense falleth in directly with the two verses following, *Though I wash my self with Snow-water, and make my hands never so clean, yet thou wilt plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloathes shall abhor me.* Taking up that interpretation, I shall connect it with these two verses, and open them in order.

In vanum laborarem, si coram Deo justificare me tentarem, ut falso me hoc velle præsupponis.

Verse 30. *If* I *wash my self with Snow-water, and make my hands never so clean*;

Washing is an act proper to the cleansing of the body, or of bodily things; and in Scripture-story we find that Travellers had water provided for them at their journeys end, to refresh and cool their bodies. These were civil washings. But besides these we find many ceremonial washings of the body, or bodily things, which implyed the removing and taking away of sin, and so were a token of internal purification. Therefore the Apostle (*Heb.* 9. 10.) describing the *Jewish* worship, and shewing the several parts of it, saith, *It stood* (we supply that word, but it suits the Text well; for the substantials, the pillars upon which their worship stood, were shadows, consisting) *in meats and drinks, and divers washings.* In Allusion to which the Lord promises (*Ezek.* 36. 25.) *I will sprinkle you with clean water:* And the Apostle *Peter* speaks of *the sprinkling of the blood of Christ* (1 Pet. 1, 2.) And *Paul* of *the laver of regeneration*, Tit. 3. 5. The Saints who came out of great tribulation, *are said to have washed their*

In lege multæ erant purificationes, quas Deus fortè instituit, ut populum aliorum gentium talibus ceremoniis assuetum facilius adduceret ad cultum verum. Pined.

robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Revel. 7. 14.) Sanctification, which is cleansing from the filth of sin, and justification, which is cleansing from the guilt of sin, are set forth by washing, 1 Cor. 6. 9. *But ye are washed.* Thus the Prophet counsels the polluted Jews (Isa. 1. 16.) *Wash you, make you clean*; which he expounds by a moral duty in the next words, *Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well.* It was usual among the Heathen to wash, as a sign of purification, especially before they went to worship their gods, or after they had defiled themselves with some grievous crime. One of the Poets gives them a reproof, *O ye who are so credulous, or easie of belief, to think that the bloody sin of murthering the bodies of other men, can be taken away by washing your own bodies.* *a* They had a great opinion of a cleansing vertue in the sea, to which some think the Prophet *Micah* alludes (Chap. 7. 19. (*He will cast all their sins into the depths of the Sea.* *b.* The ancient Christians, using to wash before they prayed, shewed a little touch of Judaisme, or of their old Gentilisme. Some have given this for one reason, why the Lord appointed so many washings among his people, that the Heathens might be the easier gained to the religion of the Jews, when they found somewhat symbolizing with their customs among them: which if it were so, yet it cannot bear out those, who have mixed Christian worship with Heathenish observations, thereby to facilitate their conversion. But doubtless *Job* had reference to those rites either of the Jews or Gentiles, when he said,

Antiquissimum fuit uti balneo aut corporis ablutione, ad detergendas animi sordes.

Abnimium faciles, qui tristia crimina cædis, Fluminea tolli posse putatis aqua.

a Romani noluerunt parricidas nudos (sed in culeum insutos) in flumen abjicere, ne cum delati essent in mare, ipsum polluerunt, quo cætera quæ violata sunt, expiari putantur. Cic. in Orat. pro Rosc.

b Christianus lotus oret. Tert. de orat. c. 10. Clem. l. 8. Const. c. 88.

Aliqui ex latinis legunt aquis vivis, vel aquis nivis. Pined.

Though I wash my self with Snow-water.

Why with Snow-water? That is (say some) with the most pure water, with the cleerest springing fountain water, or in the most crystal streams, not in the water of melted Snow, but in water like Snow for purity and orient clearness.

Others, Conceive it an allusion to that peculiar rite of those times, when they took Snow-water to wash with, rather then spring or river water, because that came from the Heavens, not from the Earth here below; and was therefore (in their opinion) more excellent in it's nature, because it had a more excellent original.

Thirdly, *Job* is thought to specifie *snow-water*, because in those Countryes the fountain or river-water was not pure, and therefore

fore they preserved Snow, and took that water to wash and cleanse with. As the custom still is in those places where good water is a rare commodity.

Or lastly, He may say, *If I wash in Snow-water*, because he would express the cleanest washing, such as makes the body look like Snow, white and pure. *White as Snow* is a proverbial (*Isa.* 1. 18.) for the most resplendent witness. And we find in Scripture, a thing is said to be washed with that, the likeness of which after washing it represents: Thus the Church glories in Christ, *That his eyes were as the eyes of a Dove by the Rivers of water washed with milk* (Cant. 5. 12) that is, his eyes were white as milk, after washing. So here, *Though* I *wash myself with snow-water*, that is, though I wash my self, till I become as white and as pure as Snow, *&c.* We read a like phrase (*Psal.* 51. 9.) *Purge me with hyssop and* I *shall be clean*, in allusion to the Levitical Law, which appointed the Priest to sprinkle both things and persons with a bunch of hyssop (*Levit.* 14. *Numb.* 19.) So the Chaldee paraphrase expounds the Psalm, *Cleanse me, as the Priests sprinkling with hyssop cleansed the people. Though* I *wash myself with Snow-water.*

In Scripture talibus aliquâ dicitur lotus, qualium referre videtur similitudinem. Sanct.

And make my hands never so clean.

The Hebrew text is very emphatical, *Though* I *wash my hands in purity*; which some express by that which is the instrument of purifying the hands, *Though* I *wash my hands with sope*; So *Mr. Broughton*, Though I wash my hands with wash-balls, to make my hands clean and sweet. We Translate, though not to the letter of the *Hebrew*, yet to the sense, *Though I wash my hands never so clean, yet*, &c.

As the former expression referreth to internal holiness: so this latter to external. The hands in Scripture note our outward works. Hands are the executive part, the instruments of action. *Your hands are full of blood*, Isa. 1. that is, your actions are cruel and bloody. there is not only blood in your hearts, but in your hands too (*Psal.* 26. 6.) I *will wash my hands in innocency, so will* I *compass thine Altar*, that is, I will make all my outward conversation pure and holy. The Lord hath *rewarded me according to the purity of my hands*, (Psal. 18. 20.) Again (Psal. 73. 13.) *I have, in vain, washed my hands in innocency*, that is, I have lived innocently in vain. The Apostle *James* calls for the holiness of the outward

outward man in the ſame Language, *Cleanſe your hands, ye ſinners, and purifie your hearts, ye double-minded,* Chap. 4. 8.

Beſides, It was uſual to waſh the hands as an emblem or token of innocency, and freedom from guilt. The law of *Moſes* appointed, in caſe a man were ſlain, no man knowing how, that the Elders of the neareſt City, ſhould waſh their hands over the Heifer that was offered in Sacrifice, ſaying, *Our hands have not ſhed this blood, neither have our eyes ſeen it*, Deut. 21. 6, 7. So *Pilate*, when he would make it viſible unto all the world (as he thought) that he was free from the blood of Chriſt, called for a baſin of water to waſh his hands: all the water in the Ocean could not waſh *Pilats* conſcience from the guilt of Chriſts blood, yet he called for a baſin of water, and waſhed his hands, ſaying, *I am free from the blood of this juſt perſon, ſee ye to it.* So then, the meaning of *Job* is, *Though I be clean within and clean without*, though my heart be as clean, as waſhing can make my hands, though (as the Apoſtle taught long after) *I lift up pure hands in prayer, without wrath and doubting*, yet

Scio quod quantumvis diligentiſſimè vitæ candorem & morum integritatem comparare ſtudeam ſimen non ideo dolorum & pœnarum expers ſim. Pined.

Verſe 31. *Thou ſhalt plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes ſhall abhor me.*

טבל

Tinxit, in tinxit ita lavit ut res non mundetur, ſed tantum ottingat humorem.

The word which we tranſlate *plunge*, ſignifies a dipping or immerſion, rather to die or ſtain, then to cleanſe, *Ezek.* 23. 15.

Futura apud Hebræos ſæpe debitum indicant.

There are two interpretations of theſe words, *Thou ſhalt plunge me in the ditch.*

They may be underſtood either, firſt thus, that, God would adjudge him ſinful, notwithſtanding all his purifyings: and ſo it anſwereth the expreſſion of the latter clauſe of the former verſe; As if he had ſaid, *Though I make my ſelf as clean as clean can be, and thereupon judge my ſelf never ſo clean, yet thou mayeſt account me unclean; yea the more I labour to juſtify my ſelf in my cleanneſs, the more unclean mayſt thou judge me to be*; Yet, *Thou wilt plunge me in the Ditch*; For we are to underſtand the words, *Thou wilt plunge me*; not as of that which the Lord would do, but as of that which the Lord might juſtly do. As if he had ſaid, Thou mighteſt have greater cauſe to plunge me in the ditch, when I am ſo fine and clean in mine own eyes, then before. When I think I have waſhed my ſelf as white as Snow, thou mayeſt look upon me, as drawn thorow a dirty channel, or as wallowed in the mire. After all my cleanſing and rinſing, and purifying, thy pure

eyes

eyes can easily see a sinner in me, and discover that I am polluted, though *I* am washed.

This phrase of plunging in a ditch, notes the greatest defilement, it imports a man all over defiled: The Jews say of a man that hath lost his credit, and is exceedingly blemished in his reputation, that he is *cast in the dirt, or thrown in the mire.*

Phrasis hæbrea est, qua fama nominisq; nitor pollui dicitur. Bold.

Again, The word which we translate *ditch*, sometimes signifies corruption only (*Psal.* 16. 10.) *Thou wilt not suffer thine holy One to see corruption.* And secondly, it signifieth a pit digged and prepared, wherein dead and corrupting carcases are laid (*Psal.* 94. 13.) *Till the pit be digged for the wicked*, that is, till they be destroyed and put into the pit.

שחת

Corruptio, interitus, illas igitur sordes intelligit, quas affert squalida mors, me de merges in locum putredinis. Varro. *l.* 4 *de Lirg. Lat.*

Besides, We learn from antiquity, that they had special pits or graves for offenders, who were *slain by the law* (as some speak) or cut off by the hand of justice; who being enemies to humane society while they lived, were not admitted society with the bodies of honest men, when they dyed. The Prophet *Isaiah* (Chap. 14. 18, 19, 20.) describing the ruine and ignominious down-fall of the King of *Babylon*, saith, *That all the Kings of the Nations, even all of them lye in glory, every one in his own house* (that is, in their Fathers sepulchres) *But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch: and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust thorow with a sword, that goe down to the stones of the pit. Thou shalt not be joyn'd to them in burial.*

And hence to be cast into a ditch notes any great humbling or affliction, reproach or contumely.

We may take it here in either sense, *Thou wilt plunge me into filth and corruption*, or shew me to be filthy and corrupt, though I cleanse my self; or, Thou wilt cast me into the greatest afflictions, notwithstanding all my purifications. *I* shall give a note suting this last sense, at the close of the whole verse.

From the first, here observe,

They who would make themselves most holy, appear most unholy before God. Thoughts of our own purity, render us impure. We are never so black before God, as when we are whitest in our own eyes. We find the Pharisee (*Luk.* 18.) washing himself in *snow-water*, and making his hands very clean, he tells us that he had fasted and prayed, and given alms, and paid tithes (this is to wash our selves in snow-water, and to make our hands very clean) but the Lord plunged this Pharisee in the ditch, he cast him for a

wicked man. The poor Publican plunged himself in the ditch and judged himself fit to be thrown into the mire; but *he went home to his house justified, rather then the other.* The Lord tells his people (Jer. 2. 22.) *Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much sope, yet thine iniquity is marked before me.* The speech is of the same importance in the letter with this of *Job*; yet there the holy Ghost rather intends an hypocritical washing by excusing or denying our sins; or (as some gloss that text) by shewing images or imaginations, fancies or forgeries of holiness. *If* thou shalt put thy self in these dresses of holiness, as if thou wert washed with nitre, and cleansed with much sople, yet thou canst not avoid mine eye, *For thine iniquity is marked before me*, I can see thy sin thorow all the dawbings and paintings, thorow thy deckings and coverings put upon it. Now as God sees iniquity thorow all the masks and coverings of hypocrites; so he can see spots thorow all the washings and cleansings of the most sincere. And if we wash our selves to justifie our selves, our very washing is ourdefiling. *God will not only see, but mark their iniquity, who think they can put all their iniquity out of his sight.* And such shall be made so vile, that not only God, but their own clothes shall abhor them, as *Job* expresses himself in the next words.

Est se excusare, culpam abnegare, simulamenta pietatis ostentare.

Mine own clothes will abhor me.

We have the word at the eighth Chapter, verse 14. *Whose hope shall loath him*, which we render, *Whose hope shall be cut off. Clothes* may be taken either properly or figuratively. Taken properly, the words may import, first, his degradation from all former dignities. *I* shall be deprived of all honour and estimation, and so the clothes which *I* wore in the dayes of my prosperity, will so much unbecome me, that they will abhor me. Or secondly, Taken properly, they are conceived to be a circumlocution of death.

Thou wilt plunge me in the pit, that is, *I shall die, and mine own clothes will abhor me.* The dead are stript; garments doe not become a dead carcase. *M. Broughtons* paraphrase upon his own translation imitates this; *Mine own clothes shall loath me*; namely, saith he, *When I go naked to the grave, as though my cloathes did loath me.*

Others understand it figuratively, *Mine own clothes shall abhor*

me

me, that is, First, Those that are my dearest friends shall abhor me, thou wilt make them flee from me, who are as near to me, as the clothes on my back.

Or secondly, In a figure, *Mine own clothes*, that is, mine own works shall *abhor me*. Hypocrites are said to come in *sheeps-cloathing* (*Mat.* 7.) that is, doing the works of those who are sincere, appearing like them in practise. And when we are warned to *keep our garments* (Rev. 16. 15.) the meaning is, that we must keep faith and a good conscience in every act of our lives.

Thirdly, It may have respect to lepers, whose clothes did abhor them, because they wore some mark of difference upon their garments, shewing that they were to be shunned, and their company avoided.

But rather in generall, *Mine own clothes shall abhor me*, notes extream pollution. If I justifie my self before God I shall be so unclean, that my clothes will be loth to touch me. We say of one that is very filthy, *A man would not touch him with a pair of tongs*. And it is usual in Scripture (to give you that rule for the understanding of this and other the like forms of speaking) when a matter is spoken of in a way of excess, that things insensible have sense, yea reason and understanding ascribed to them: abhorring, is an act beyond sense, it hath a mixture of reason and understanding; now to note his exceeding loathsomeness to God and man, who attempts to justifie himself before God, the text saith, *His clothes* (which have neither life nor sense) *shall abhor him*. When the Pharisees, envying the acclamations which the multitude of Christs Disciples gave him at his entrance into *Jerusalem*, desired that he would rebuke and silence them: Christ answered, *I tell you, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out*, importing how just an occasion there was, why his name and glory should be lifted up; do ye think much that reasonable men speak? if these should hold their peace, the stones that have neither life nor sense would speak. Thus (Gen. 4. 10.) to note the foulness of *Cains sin*, and his cruelty towards his brother, God saith, *The earth hath opened her mouth to receive thy brothers blood from thy hand*, as if the earth had been sensibly affected with the cruelty of *Cain* towards his brother; thou wouldst not let his blood stay in his body, therefore the earth in kindness opened her mouth, and took in his blood from thy hand, and that cryes up unto me. So here, I shall be so foul, that if my clothes had sense, life and

Tam squalidus ero ut ea quibus nullus est sensus, tantum squalorem sentiri et abominari videantur.

Ubi aliquarum rerum excessus est, dicuntur aliquando in Scriptura sentire insensibilia. Sanct.

Job summam fœditatem animæ per summam fœditatem corporis indigitat.

Tam fœdus à judicio tuo discederem, ut is corpore est fœdius quem vestes suæ horren. Coc.

Quamvis ego mundus sum a culpa, tamen pœnis atq; dolorum, & ægritudinum sordibus et squalore obsoletam.

and reason, and could dispose of their own actings, and set themselves upon what body and limbs they pleased, surely they would put themselves off from my body, and never come on again, they would abhor me, *I* should be as filthy before God in soul, as he is in body, who must be washed before he is fit to have his clothes put on him: *As to be cloathed with shame, so to have our clothes ashamed of us, notes the greatest dishonour.*

Lastly, This casting into the ditch, and the abhorring of his clothes, may refer to the continuance of his afflictions; though I should make my self never so pure, yet the Lord would cast me again into the ditch of affliction, he will put me into the pit of trouble, till (like a man drawn out of the mire) mine own cloaths abhor me, or make me an abhorring to all that see me. I know the Lord will make further tryal of me.

Hence note,

God casts his servants again and again into the miery ditch, as refiners cast gold again and again into the fiery furnace, to make them more pure.

That which defiles the outward man, may be cleansing to the inward: and the abominable clothing of the body, may be a means to put the soul into the most handsome dress.

Secondly, Observe, That

After purgings and cleansings, the Lord often goes on with further chastenings.

Though I wash my self, &c. yet thou wilt cast me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths will abhor me. Yea, our purgings and cleansings are sometimes so far from causing God to take off our afflictions, that they do but fit us for more affliction: For the Lord will not trust an impure spirit, or an heart defiled under many corruptions, under great afflictions. He therefore cleanses many, and makes them more holy, that they may be more fit to bear afflictions. No certain argument can be grounded upon this, that a man shall come out of affliction, because he is cleansed, for God chuses (in some cases) to afflict such most, who are most cleansed. The Lord hath as much service from us, while we suffer, as while we doe his will; passive obedience is higher and harder service then active, and an unclean heart is of the two (though it be fit for neither) more unfit for suffering then for doing. Therefore *Job*'s friends could not groundedly affirm, that he should be delivered, if he were cleansed. Indeed if Gods

thoughts

thoughts were like mans thoughts, or if he were tied by such rules as we, we might make such conclusions; but (*Job* concludes) *He is not a man as we are.*

JOB, Chap. 9. Vers. 32, 33, &c.

For he is not a man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.
Neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

JOB doth two things in the close of this Chapter.

First, He again renounceth all thought or intendment of answering God by any worthiness or goodness in himself. A point he had often touched before, it being the grand objection which his friends brought against him, as if his spirit were heightned np to the presumption of a tryal or contest with God himself. '*Tis a duty to clear our selves most, where and in what we are most suspected.*

This he doth in the 32. and 33. verses.

He is not a man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.
Neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

In which words *Job* offers two things, to assure them that he was far enough from such an engaging with God.

First, From the disparity of their condition (vers. 32.) *He is not a man as I am.* God is not like me, I am no match for God; and I will not be so fool-hardy, as to contend with one, who is infinitely above me.

Secondly, Lest any should think, that though himself, hand to hand (as we speak) would not venture upon God, yet he might (possibly) get some friend or second, to interpose and umpire it between them, or determine whether Gods dealings with him were just and equal, or no: And so (though not alone; yet) by a friend, or a third party to them both, he would try out the matter. No (saith *Job* in the 33. verse) not so neither, as I alone

lone will not undertake him; so *neither is there any Daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.*

In the two last verses *Job* makes a petition to the Lord, desiring a favourable condescention, that he would be pleased to abate of the present height and extremity of his pain, and then he hoped yet, that he might answer him, though he would not contend with him; answer him in reference to his own integrity, about which his friends had charged and wounded him, though not in reference to his own righteousness, about which the Lord might charge and condemn him, *Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me, then would I speak, and not fear him, but it is not so with me.* He concludes with the difference of his state, for what he desired of God it might be: And he begins with the difference of his person, from what God himself is. It is not with me as I could wish, and God is not such an one, nor can be, as I am, and must be.

Verse 32. *For he is not a man as I am, &c.*

He doth not say, God is not such a man as I am, but God is not a man as I am. One man may say unto another man, Thou art not such a man as I am: Every different degree or endowment among men, may bear a man out in saying so, and pride will prompt a man to say so, when he is not in degree better, but in kind worse then other men. Such was the language of the Pharisee (Luk 18. 11.) *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican*: yet no man can say to another man, *Thou art not a man as I am.*

But seeing God is not a man at all, what is there in this assertion of *Job*? *He is not a man as I am.*

The words import a double difference. First, a difference in qualification. Secondly, in nature: here *Job* chiefly intends the difference of quality (which yet in God is his nature) that he was not wise, and just, and holy, and pure as God.

Non tam essentiæ ad essentiam, quam qualitatis ad qualitatem, i. e. suæ ad divinam puritatem collatio fit et denotatur. Bold.

Moses in his song (*Exod.* 15. 3.) after the overthrow of the *Egyptians* in the red sea, speaks thus, *The Lord is a man of War*; that phrase intends not a humane nature to God; when he saith, *God is a man of War*, he meaneth only this, *God is a great Warriour.* We call a *Ship of War*, *A man of War.* As a *man of words* signifies *an eloquent man*, though with some only a *talkative man*: So *a man of War* signifies a *famous Warriour*, or one trained

ed up for War; in which sense *Saul* saith of *Goliah*, that he had *been a man of War from his youth* (1 Sam. 17. 33.) God is a great Warriour, the most Potent Commander, *the Generalissimo of all the Armies in Heaven and Earth, the Lord of hosts is his Name: He is a man of War*, though he is not a man.

Further, when *Job* saith, *He is not a man as I am*, he gives us the reason of all he had said before, especially of what he had said immediately before, *Though I wash my self with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch. For he is not a man as I am*; that is, though I by washing my self should think I were all white, and not a spot to be seen upon me (as hypocrites by covering themselves, think they are all hid, and not a sin to be found about them) yet he would throw me into the ditch again, as like to like, dirt to dirt, for he is not a man as I am, he hath other eyes, and thoughts, and wayes then creatures have.

Ratio est omnium superiorum, etsi justus sim, cum Deo tamen contendens pro fonte habeor, quia non est par utriusq; nostrum conditio. Merc.

Secondly, As they contain a reason why the Lord would judge him impure, though he should wash himself with snow-water; so also, why the Lord would afflict him, though he should wash himself with snow-water, *He is not a man as I am*. As if he had said, should I see a man without spot or speck, without blame or fault, yet full of wounds and stripes, full of troubles and sorrows: should I see him afflicted, of whom I could not say he had sinned, it were beyond my reason. But though I cannot, yet the Lord can see reason to afflict a man in whom I see no iniquity. He knows why and wherefore, he may and doth cast them into the fire in whom I can see no dross. *He is not a man as I am*. God exceeds man in his actings, as much as he doth in his nature, as he is what man is not, so he can do what man cannot; *Every thing is in working, as it is in being*. God alwayes works like himself, and infinitely above man.

As to the present business, he works above man, chiefly in two things:

First, Man cannot justly commence a sute against, or contend with another man, except he be able to charge him with some wrong that he hath done him, or lay some crime to his charge.

Secondly, A human judge cannot condemn or cast a man, unless he first legally convict him of his crime. Thus it is with men in their judiciall proceedings. He that contends must know some crime; and the judge passes sentence as he sees the crime proved and

and make good againſt him; but *God is not a man*, he may proceed to judgement without an accuſation, and he may give judgement before the crime be proved; *Job* was ſmitten without cauſe truly alledged, much leſs atteſted. God afflicts that grace may be proved, not becauſe ſin is proved, *He is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him.*

Anſwer him.

It is a judiciary word, or anſwering in judgemen; *To juſtifie* is a *Law terme*, and *ſo is to anſwer*; one puts in his bill, and another his anſwer; ſome Courts proceed by bill and anſwer, If the Lord (ſaith *Job*) ſhould put in his bill againſt me, I would not put in my anſwer, *He is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him.*

Reſpondere hoc loco, poteſt eſſe verbum forenſe.

Or we may take the word [*Anſwer*] in general, for the returning of ſatisfaction to a queſtion. If the Lord demand a reaſon or an account of me, I could not ſatisfie him. Many, who can give a reaſon of the hope that is in them, cannot give a reaſon of the ſufferings which are upon them: But though they know no particular reaſon why they ſuffer, yet they believe it is not without reaſon. Some holy Martyrs have ſaid to their cruel perſecutors, urging them with ſophiſticall Queſtions, *We can dye, but we cannot diſpute.* And ſo the Saints under the moſt difficult providences of God, are reſolved to ſay, We can die under them, but we will not diſpute them. *He* is not a man that we ſhould anſwer him in what he ſpeaks or doth.

Hence obſerve,

First, *The conſideration, that God is above man, is enough to humble and ſilence man.*

No man is proud in the preſence of another whom he thinks to be his better. The ſight of great beauty keeps down pride of beauty, *Pride cannot live in the eye of that which is above the reaſon of it in our ſelves*: Yea, he that finds he is but equal or upon even ground with others, can hardly be proud of any thing in himſelf. While we ſuppoſe our gifts or knowledge, but like thoſe of other men, we are not lifted up in the opinion of them. Now, If equallity check pride, a thought of ſuperiority muſt needs kill it. And if the common ſuperiority of a man kills our pride, how much more doth the knowledge of that ſuperexcellent ſuperiority which is in God? Doth not the beauty and dignity

nity of God, obſcure the luſtre and darken the beauty of all creatures? Is the ſhining of the Stars any thing, when the Sun appears? Much leſs is the holineſs, ſtrength, and goodneſs of man any thing, when the goodneſs, holineſs and ſtrength of God ſtand forth or appear: we muſt ſay we are nothing, when we ſee what God is. The ſight of him, in whom nothing of our imperfections can be found, cannot but humble us in the ſight of all our perfections. Hence, when the Lord would abaſe man, and extoll himſelf, he removes all of man from himſelf (*1 Sam.* 15. 29.) *God is not a man that he ſhould repent*; Men are full of repentings, and that they are ſo, ſhews them to be men. There is a repentance which is a grace of God, and there is a repentance which is an infirmity in man. By the former, men turn to God from that ſin, in which they were, or have done. By the latter, men turn both from God and man in what they promiſe or purpoſe, either to be or do. They are this day of one mind, and to morrow of another; to day they love, and to morrow they hate; now they will, and anon they will not. They are in and out, no man knows where to find them; but God is ever the ſame, he changes not. *Elihu* ſends a challenge to all Teachers, in the Name of God, *Who teacheth like him?* (Chap. 36. 22.) God himſelf challengeth *Job* in his own name (Chap. 40. 9.) *Haſt thou an arm like God? Or canſt thou thunder with a voice like him? To whom will you liken me* (ſaith God, when he would bring down the pride of the creature) *To whom will you liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?* (Iſa. 46. 5.) Why do ye exalt your ſelves? Why have ye ſuch high thoughts of your ſelves? Can ye find out any to compare with me? Or can ye make a parallel of me among all my creatures?

All the unevenneſs of man towards God, ariſes from preſumptuous thoughts of his evenneſs with God. Take a taſte in two or three particulars.

Firſt, Man grows into a boldneſs of ſinning againſt God: becauſe he thinks God is but ſo holy as man is; he conceits that which ſutes his ſpirit, ſutes Gods Spirit alſo: This cauſeth him to do many things moſt unſutable to the Spirit of God (Pſal. 50. 18.) *When thou ſaweſt a thief, then thou conſenteſt with him, and thou haſt been partaker with the adulterers: thou giveſt thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit, &c. theſe things haſt thou done.* And what encouraged or hardned him to do theſe things? The

next words give us an account of that, *Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thy self*; that is, thou didst frame conceptions of me according to the *Idæa* of thine own brain, or the model of thine own heart. Thou wast well pleased with such filthiness and abominations, therefore thou didst conclude, I would not be displeased with them. The true reason why most men make nothing of evil, is, because they make God nothing in goodness (as to that point) beyond themselves; this doth not trouble our spirits, we see no hurt in what we do: Surely then God sees no hurt in it, neither is his Spirit troubled with our doings.

Secondly, Boldness in pleading with, and complaining against God, when he doth what likes not us, arises from thoughts that we are like him. None would quarrel at what God doth, in cutting out and proportioning their own estates to them: or in casting down the humble and meek; in exalting the proud and vile, if they did fully believe God had as much right and reason as they see he hath power to do what he doth. Man draws God into his own compass, and then wonders to find him work so out of compass. If I were as God, saith one, I would do thus and thus; surely, God is as I am, he hath such thoughts as I have, saith another, then why doth he thus? Till we have fully studied this point, *That God is not as we are*, we shall never rest fully satisfied in what God doth, if he doth what we would not.

Thirdly, Unbelief springs from the same muddy Fountain: unbelief of the power of God to deliver us, when we are in outward straits and dangers; and unbelief of the mercy of God to pardon us, when we are in spiritual straits and desertions. What's the reason why, when great dangers encompass us, we cannot believe deliverance? Do we not make God like to our selves? Do we not shorten his hand to our own measure, and think it cannot be done, because men cannot do it? And for mercy about the pardon of sin; man being awakened sees how he hath provoked God, sin stares upon his face, and he finds out many aggravations upon his sin: then he begins to collect thus, certainly if a man had so provoked his neighbour, he could never pardon or forgive him; Can then such sins as these be forgiven by God? Mans mercy cannot reach so high as this, therefore surely the mercies of God will not. We have a very gracious promise, backt with a caution to prevent these jealousies (*Isai.* 55. 6, 7.) *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts,*

and

and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Now, as when God calls upon man to obey his will, and do his Commandments, he is apt to ſay, at leaſt in his heart, the duties are too many, and the burdens too great to be born: So when the Lord calleth upon wicked men, the worſt of wicked men, to repent or turn unto him, and he will abundantly pardon, or he will multiply to pardon (as it is in the original) they are ready to object, What? Pardon ſuch as we are? We are too filthy and vile for waſhing. Surely, he will not pardon us. Theſe mercies are too many for us, and theſe favours too great for us to receive. Well (ſaith God) I preconceive your conceits of me, ye are meaſuring me by your ſelves, ye think it cannot be done, becauſe ye cannot do it; your hearts are too narrow to paſs by ſo many, ſo great provocations, therefore ye ſay, mine is too narrow alſo. Do ye thus meaſure me the Lord, O fooliſh people and unwiſe? I would have you know, *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your wayes my wayes, for as the heavens are higher then the earth, ſo are my wayes higher then your wayes and my thoughts then your thoughts*, Verſ. 8,9. As if he had ſaid, Your thoughts are as much below my mercy, as your wayes were below my holineſs. Ceaſe then from doubting what I have promiſed, as I would have you ceaſe from doing what I have forbidden. Your unbelief that I will not pardon your ſin, diſhonours me as much as your diſobedience did in committing ſin. Till we believe God is holy above us, we fear not to ſin; and till we believe God is merciful above us, we cannot believe he will pardon our ſin.

Thus we ſee how the lifting up of our ſelves in our thoughts to an equality, or to ſome ſimilitude with God, or the drawing down of God to an equality, or ſome ſimilitude with our ſelves, is the ground and cauſe of all our unequal carriage towards God, of our boldneſs in ſinning, of our boldneſs in pleading with, and complaining againſt him, of our extreme unbelief in the point of deliverance from troubles, or of the pardon of our ſins. Secondly, Obſerve,

There is no compariſon between God and man.

He is not a man as I am. Man is like to man, face anſwers face, and heart anſwers heart, ſtrength anſwers ſtrength, and wit anſwers wit. *Solomon* concludes this Eccleſ. 6. 10.) *That which hath*

hath been, is named already, and it is know that it is man. A man is but a man, be he never ſo great in worldly wealth or honour: as he bears the name, ſo he hath the nature of man ſtill; *Nor can he contend with him that is mightier then he, i. e.* with God If he venture beyond his line, or move out of the ſphear of his activity, if he would act more then a man, he ſhall quickly find that he is but man, *He cannot contend with him that is mightier then he.* Man was indeed made in the likeneſs of God, *Gen.* 1. 27. *In the Image of God created he him,* yet we muſt not ſay, God is like man, he is not in our image. God put ſome impreſſions of himſelf upon man, but he took no impreſſions of man upon himſelf. *He is not a man as I am.* He hath given us ſome of his own excellencies, but he hath not taken upon him any of our weakneſſes. God hath honoured man to give him ſomewhat of himſelf, but God ſhould diſhonour himſelf to take any thing of man. Thus man is in the likeneſs of God: but God is not in the likeneſs of man. Take heed of ſuch thoughts. *It is as dangerous to frame a likeneſs or a ſimilitude of God to our hearts, as to frame a likeneſs or a ſimilitude of God upon a wall,* (Exod 15.11.) *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongſt the gods?* That is, there is none like unto thee: None amongſt the gods, neither among thoſe who are falſly called gods, the Idols of the Heathen, nor among thoſe who are truly called *gods* (for God calls them ſo) the Angels in Heaven, and Magiſtrates here upon the Earth: among theſe truly called gods, there is none like the true God, much leſs is there any among the meer pure mortals, like unto the immortal God. *Who is like unto thee, glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders?* So (*Mic.* 7. 18.) *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſion of the remnant of his heritage. Who is a God like unto thee?* Not only is there no man that can pardon as God, but there is no God that can pardon like God, he puts it upon that, *Who is a God like unto thee?* Not as if he granted that there were any other gods beſides the Lord, but to meet with the thoughts of men, with thoſe ſinful principles and conceits, which lodge in man, and make other gods. To ſay of God only this, *He is God*, is to ſay all; we cannot ſay more good of God, then to call him God; as we cannot ſay more evil of ſin, then to call it ſin; when we have called it ſin, we have called it all. The Apoſtle (*Rom.* 7.13.) puts that upon it, as the worſt he could ſay of it, *Sin that it might appear ſin.* We cannot

cannot repreſent it in a worſe likeneſs then its own. All men ſay they ſin, but *ſin appears ſin* to very few. And when the Apoſtle would put a diſgraceful title or epethite upon ſin, he inveſts it with its own name, *ſinful ſin*. Thus to the point in hand, we cannot call God more, then when we call him God. Nothing can be predicated of him better then himſelf. When God appears to be God, all excellency appears. All men (almoſt) acknowledge God, but God appears to very few. 'Tis but little of God that can be known: and there are not many who know that little; very many know but little of that little, and moſt know nothing of it at all.

Thus alſo to ſay that man is man, is proof and aggravation enough of his depraved condition (Hoſ. 6. 7.) *They like men have tranſgreſſed the Covenant*, they have done like themſelves. When we ſee men vain, and wicked, and ſinful, and covetous, and earthly, we may ſay of them, they have done like men; and how wonderous and glorious things ſoever God doth, we can but ſay, *He hath done like God.*

As a conſectary from the whole, take this caution, *If God is not a man as we are, then God muſt never be meaſured by the rule and line of man.* Man hath not line enough to meaſure God by. The Lord exceeds man in all; he is not only above mans infirmities, but he is above all his perfections. The Lord is not only not weak as man is weak, or unholy as man is unholy, but the Lord is not ſtrong as man is ſtrong, nor holy as man is holy, nor juſt as man is juſt, nor wiſe as man is wiſe: Then, man muſt not venture to judge of the wiſdom of God by his own wiſdom, or of the juſtice, holineſs and ſtrength of God, by his own ſtrength, holineſs and juſtice. Man is not able to meaſure God in any of his Attributes; and in three things eſpecially, man ſhould take heed of meaſuring God in his actings.

Firſt, In the great work of election. In this man is very apt to be medling, and to be meaſuring God by the line of natural reaſon, or of civil juſtice: the Apoſtles diſpute beats down this preſumption, *Rom. 9.* We read there how man begins to buſtle and ſtartle at that great concluſion (verſ. 18.) *Therefore he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* If it be thus, ſaith he, if every mans ſtate be peremptorily determined by the will of God, if he loves and hates before men have done either good or evil, *Why doth he find fault? for who hath reſiſted his will?* What need any trouble themſelves about the way,

way, when their end is under an unmovable decree? Why should any strive to forsake evil and do good on earth, seeing it was resolved in Heaven what should become of them, before they had done either good or evil? Thus the pride and ignorance of man cavils at the decrees of God. But stay (saith the Apostle) *O man, who art thou that replyest against God!* He is not a man as thou art: he hath done what he hath done by vertue of his just prerogative, and therefore he is not unjust in doing it. Besides, if ye will needs argue from reason, then see how common reason confutes this blasphemy, *Hath not the Potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?* What if God hath done thus, and what if he will do thus? What hast thou to do with it? Know thy place, and keep thy rank; art not thou clay in the hand of the Potter?

Secondly, Measure not God by your own line in his providential dispensations: He may have a method of his own in giving or taking away, in pulling down or building up, in wounding or healing, in abasing man, or in raising him, because all is his own. *He who hath a right to all, can wrong none, and he who possesses all, is debtor to none.*

Thirdly, Measure not God by your own line in the matter of your ordinary approvings: and that two wayes.

First, Do it not in your approving of things. And

Secondly, Do it not in your approving of persons. Take heed first of measuring God by your selves in your approving of things, as if because you approve it, therefore God surely doth. This misconceit hath been the cause of almost all, and almost all the cause of all the superstition, idolatry, and will-worship that ever was in the world. Man thinks God must needs like any thing which is done to his honour; hence because the adorning and adoring of images, bowing to altars, using of unwritten Ceremonies, are directed to the honour of God, therefore man concludes surely God likes them. Whereas nothing pleases God, but what himself appoints: he is never honoured, but when he is obeyed. As no man hath been his counsellour, to direct him what to do with us: So no man can be his counsellour, to direct him what to require of us. *Not that which we commend is approved, but that which the Lord commends.*

Secondly, Take heed of this in your approbation or estimation of persons, *Not he whom you commend is approved, but he whom the*

Lord

Lord commends. We should judge of men as we believe God judges. Or (to come nearer) let no man think himself is approved of God, because he is approved by himself. *Many flatter themselves in their own eyes, till their iniquity is found to be hateful,* (*Psal.* 36.2.) Christ intimates this, speaking to the Pharisees, (*Luk.* 16 15.) *Ye are they that justifie your selves*, ye have high thoughts of your own worth, and glory in your own excellencies, and ye think God hath high thoughts of you, that he glories in you too; but let me tell you, *That which is highly esteemed amongst men, is an abomination in the sight of God.* We are the men, said the Pharisees, ours are excellent gifts, thus they admired and doted upon themselves: but the Lord found them out, and what they highly esteemed he abominated. Some write and subscribe their own letters testimonial, and can get no hand to them but their own. *Not he who commends himself is approved, but he whom the Lord commends*; such shall find, that their own good word would do them no good, *He is not a man as they are. He*, saith *Job*, *is not a man as I am, that I should answer him.*

And we should come together in judgment.

It hath been shewed what *judgment* is, at the 19th. verse of this Chapter, and at the third verse of the eighth Chapter, therefore I shall not now stay upon it, only as to the matter in hand; Judgment may be taken three wayes.

First, For pleading, which is but preparatory to judgment, the opening and arguing of the case or fact under trial. 1 *Disceptatio & mutuus ἔλεγχος rationum.*

Secondly, For the decision and determination of the case according to law, or the award of judgment. 2 *Juris definitio.*

Thirdly, For the inflicting and executing of the sentence according to the judgment awarded. 3 *Executio castigationis & debiti.* Merc.

Here *Job* chiefly intends the first, *He is not a man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment*, that is, that I should plead, argue and debate my matters with him before any other Judge. God and man cannot come together to be judged; for all mankind must receive their judgment from God. Or nearer the Hebrew (which sutes the former clause better) *He is not a man as I am, that we should come alike to judgment*; No, we should be very unlike, very unequally matched in judgment. Man and man, who are upon even terms in their nature, may yet *Ut veniamus pariter in judicium.*

be

be upon ſuch uneven terms in their condition, that they cannot come alike to judgment. A poor man cannot grapple with a rich man, nor a mean man with the honourable. Now, if they who are of the ſame nature cannot come alike in judgment, becauſe of a diſparity in their condition; How ſhall they who differ not only in condition, but in nature? Can God and man? Can poor wretched and miſerable man, come alike in judgment with the great and glorious God? and ſo the meaning of *Job* may be thus conceived, *If I had only a man (like my ſelf) to deal with, then I would venture a trial with him, at any ſeat of judgment, or Court of Juſtice; but he is not a man as I am, much leſs ſuch a man as I am. How ſhall I ſet my ſelf with him to be judged, when as himſelf is the Judge of all, and is himſelf judged of none?*

Hence obſerve,

Man is not able to contend with God in judgment.

Who is like me, and who will appoint me the time (or (nearer the letter) *who will convent me in judgment?*) *Who is that ſhepherd that will ſtand before me?* Iſa. 49.19. Man muſt come before God in judgment, *We muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt*, (2 Cor. 5.10.) None ſhall eſcape his Tribunal. But man cannot ſtand before God in judgment. The wicked cannot ſtand at all before him in judgment, becauſe they ſtand upon their own bottom. The righteous dare not ſtand before him in judgment upon their own bottom; if they ſhould, themſelves and their cauſe would quickly fall together.

There are ſeven conſiderations which tell us, that we cannot come together, much leſs alike together with God in judgment.

1. He is of ſuch ſtrength, that none can wreſt themſelves out of his hand. No power can daunt him.

2. He is of ſuch ſincerity, that bribes cannot corrupt him, nor can gifts put out his eyes.

3. He is of ſuch wiſdom, that none can over-reach him, nor can our wit entangle him.

4. He is *ſo knowing*, that none of our ſins and failings, no not the leaſt of them, are ſecrets to, or hidden from him.

5. He is ſo holy, that he cannot bear with the leaſt ſin, and ſo juſt, that he cannot but puniſh it, unleſs he receive ſatisfaction for it.

6. He

6. He cannot be a party in judgment, for he is the supreme Judge, and there is no appealing from his sentence.

7. He is the last, yea, an everlasting Judge, and therefore there is no repealing of his sentence. Who is able to contend with him, whom no power can daunt, no bribes corrupt, no wit over-reach, who knows all our sins, and will spare none of them, from whose sentence there is no appealing, and whose sentence cannot be repealed? There is no Judge above God, therefore we cannot appeal from him; there is none to come after God, therefore what he hath judged cannot be repealed.

Job having thus waved and professed against contending with God in judgment, proceedeth in the thirty third verse, to shew that there is none to whom his case might be referred for arbitration. There are two wayes by which controversies are ended.

First, by the legal sentence of the publick Judge.

Secondly, By the moderation of a private friend. This latter *Job* means, when he saith,

Verse 33. *Neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us, that can lay his hand upon us both.*

The Septuagint render these words as a wish, or as a prayer, *O that there were a Dayes-man*, or, *a Mediatour betwixt God and me, that might lay his hand upon us both.* But the original bears it clearly in the negative,

Εἰθε ἦν ὁ μεσίτης ἡμῶν καὶ ἐλέγχων. Sept.

Neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us.

The word which we translate *Dayes-man*, cometh from a root which signifieth to argue or reprove, and so some render it here, *Neither is there any Arguer or Reprover*, none to set the matter right between God and me, none to state the question between us, none to reprove the Lord, if I should say, or if by the common rules of justice it should appear he hath done me wrong. The word is used in that sense (*Gen.* 31. 24.) where *Jacob* tells his uncle *Laban*, *The Lord rebuked thee yesternight*; the Lord himself came as an umpire, as a Dayes-man betwixt *Jacob* and *Laban*, and rebuked *Laban* for his hard unjust thoughts of, and intentions concerning *Jacob*; *Take heed* (saith God) *thou speak not unto Jacob either good or bad*, that is, do not

מוכיח יכח

Arguere Heb. Non est arguens inter nos vel increpans.

threaten or perswade him to return, thou wilt repent it if thou doest. Thus also the Lord appeared, as a *Dayes-man* between his people of old, and the great ones of the world (*Psal.* 105. 14.) *He suffered no man to do them wrong, yea, he rebuked Kings for their sakes.* God is alwayes able to, and often doth interpose for, and vindicate his people from the oppressions of men. *'Tis costly medling with the Saints. Kings may get a rebuke for it. Yea, Kings may smart, and Kingdoms shake for it.*

Fere omnes interpretes hunc versum de Mediatore seu arbitro, quem jurisconsulti vocant sequestrem, intelligunt, quasi Job optasset ordinarium judicem præcedenti versiculo, mediatorem vero seu arbitrum hoc versu.

What a *Dayes-man* is, is so plain and well known by the custom and usage of most places, that it needs little explication. We in our language sometimes call him an *Umpire*, sometimes an *Arbitratour*, sometimes a *Mediatour*, sometimes a *Referrer*; and in some Countreys with us, when a question arises between neighbours, concerning which they are unwilling to spend money and time in sutes of Law, they say, *We will refer it unto men*; which kind of speaking seems to allude to the title of Magistrates and Judges, whom the Scripture calleth gods; and when a business is brought before them, it may be said to be referr'd or put to God. In opposition to which, when it is taken up by the umpiridge of friends, it is said, *To be referred or put to men.* We in our English tongue, call such *Dayes-men*, either because they bestowed a dayes pains upon the ending of a business, or because they were obliged to end it by a set day, whereas Judges may take more liberty to themselves. Yet some of the *Greeks* express all mans judgment by this word, *Mans-day*, because certain dayes were appointed for judicature. The Apostle *Paul* uses the same phrase (1 *Cor.* 4. 3.) in opposition to the *Lords-day*, the great day of judgment, to which he there appeals, from all the dayes set for mans judgment in this world. The Latins call *Dayes-man*, *Sequestres*; and *Critiques* tell us, that as the *Dayes-man* is expressed by a word in the *Hebrew*, whose root signifies to rebuke, because a *Dayes-man* had power to rebuke and reprove him that had done the wrong: So he is called *Sequester* in the Latine, from a word which signifies to follow, because of a power committed to him, that which way soever he should state and determine the business between the parties, they were bound to follow, and submit to his award; or, because he was supposed a man of such wisdom, faithfulness and integrity, that both parties might safely follow him: Hence he was called *Sequester*, that is, one whom they must or might follow, and abide by his sentence. To assur-

Ideo sequester appellatur quod ejus qui electus sit, utraq; pars fidem sequatur. Gel. *l.* 20. c. 10 *Sequester est qui errantibus medius intervenit, qui apud Græcos μέσος dicitur, apud quem pignora deponi solent à sequendo dictus, quod ejus fidem utraque pars sequatur.* Isidor. *l.* 10. *Etymol.*

assure which the parties usually ingaged themselves under penalties (of valuable damage to the business in question) to stand to his arbitration.

There are five things (by which we may more distinctly understand *Jobs* meaning) belonging to a *Dayes-man*, or an *Umpire*.

1. He must be agreed upon and chosen by both parties; for unless he be accepted by both of them, he can have no power to determine for, or against either of them.

2. He must hear both sides speak, and alledge what they can for themselves, before he determines.

3. He must beat out the matter by interrogatories and questions; he must not stay upon the bare narrative of the persons.

4. He must have power to conclude and determine of the differences betwixt them.

5. Both parties must be bound, at least by promise, to stand to the determination which he shall make. Such a one is a *Dayes-man* among men: who is also called a *Compromiser*, and his work, the *Compromising* of a matter, because as he is elected by the mutual consent, so confirmed by the mutual promise of those who are at variance, to reconcile them, and take up their differences. Now, saith *Job*, as there is no judge, so there is no *Dayes man* betwixt me and God.

Talis judex vocatur compromissarius, quasi ex compromisso à litigatoribus sumpto.

That might lay his hand upon us both.

Some understand the words [*upon us both*] of *Job* and his friends, *There is not a Dayes-man betwixt me and my friends*, not one that can judge and consider of my innocency and their charge; as if he had said, *Though I will not plead it out with God, yet I dare refer the controversie betwixt you and me to an equal Umpire, I dare go to the trial of my innocency with you, but I see no Dayes-man; you are all parties in the business, and I know of none that will stand betweenus indifferently and unprejudiced.*

But the text refers clearly to God, *There is no Dayes-man*, none to arbitrate the matter between God and me, *None to lay his hands upon us both.*

To lay on hands is diversly used in Scripture. The hand signifies all power: Hence, to lay the hands, is to put forth power: and to do so, is taken sometimes in an ill sense, and sometimes in a good sense.

First, In an ill sense, and so to lay the hands, is to strike or smite even to death, *Gen.* 22.12. *Lay not thine hand upon the child, upon Isaac*, that is, do not slay him. We have the same expression (*Gen.* 37. 22.) when *Reuben* pleaded for *Joseph* that he should not be murthered, *Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit, and lay no hand upon him*; that is, do not destroy him. This laying on of the hands, notes any violent act, either proceeding from holy zeal or justice, as in *Nehemiah*, who threatens the prophaners of the Sabbath, *If ye do so again I will lay hands on you*; or from malice, as in the chief Priests, *who sought to lay hands on Christ the Lord of the Sabbath* (Luk 20.19.) And Christ prophesying what the condition of his Disciples and of believers should be, what usage they should find in the world, tells them (*Mat.* 21.12.) *They shall lay their hands upon you, and persecute you.* Thus *Haman thought scorn to lay his hands on Mordecai alone* (Esth. 3. 6.) He had a design to take revenge upon the whole Nation of the Jews.

Secondly, To lay on the hands is taken in a good sense; and so I find it used three wayes.

1. In benedictions, Mark 10.16. *Christ took up the young children in his arms, and laid his hands upon them, and blessed them.* As under the Law, *Levit.* 1. 4. and Chap. 4. 15. The people or the Elders laying their hands upon the beast, which was to be offered in Sacrifice, intimated the laying of all their sins by faith upon Christ, of whom that Sacrifice was a type. So Christs laying his hands upon those children, implied the bestowing and pouring out of mercy upon them, in the pardoning of their sins, and the furnishing of them with the graces of his Spirit. The same action used by the Apostles in the name of Christ, had the same signification and effect. When *Peter* and *John* came to *Samaria*, and saw what work the Word had made among that people, *They laid their hands on them, and they received the holy Ghost*, Act. 8.17. *Paul* likewise laid his hands on the Disciples at *Ephesus*, and they received the holy Ghost, *Act.* 19 6. It was used also as a sign of healing, Mark 16. 18. *They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover:* And (Mat. 9. 18.) the Ruler saith unto Christ, *My daughter is sick, but come and lay thine hands on her, and she shall be healed.* Some interpret the Rulers desire of this sign, to be as a sign he had faith, so also that his faith was weak. The Centurion (concerning whom Christ testified, *I have not found*

found so great faith, no not in Israel) *desired Christ but to speak the word only, and his servant should be healed* (Mat. 8.8.) As a word is the proper object of faith, so faith acts most properly, when it rests and lives upon a *word only*. Signs are mercies to the weak, and they are witnesses of our weakness. *Signs are but crouches and spectacles to help the lameness and dimsightedness of faith.* But to our text.

2. Laying on of hands was used in the ordination or solemn setting of a man apart unto an office. *The children of Israel*, that is, some of the chief of them (under the Ceremonial Law) *laid their hands upon the Levites*, Num. 8. 10. which was either a testification that they gave up all carnal and worldly interests in them, and bequeathed them wholly unto God, or an approbation of their office, and of the Levites ministration in it on their behalf. The same Ceremony (for the matter) was continued in the sending forth of Gospel-officers. *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecie, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery*, was *Pauls* counsel to *Timothy*, in reference to himself (1 *Tim.*4.14.) And in reference to others (1 *Tim.*5.22.) *Lay hands suddenly on no man*. And *Paul* and *Barnabas* being immediately designed by God for a special work of the Ministery, to which they were called before, were sent away with *fasting and prayer, and the laying on of hands*, Act. 13. 3

Impositio manuum potestatem signum, q d. qui utrumque nostrum valet manu imposita coercere. Mercer.

3 The hand specially signifies civil power, Psa. 89. 25. *I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right-hand in the floods*; that is, I will give him power over them who dwell by the seas. And then, *Laying on of hands*, implies the authority which one man hath over another to determine or resolve a case, or to settle a business between them, and that is the intendment of it here, *There is no Dayes-man that might lay his hand upon us both*; that is, who may authoritatively decide and make an end of this controversie. To impose the hand was to compose the difference. I find a threefold posture of the *Dayes-man* observed in the action of his hand.

Ponere manum, est litem componere & controversiæ authores ad fœdus concordiamque adducere.

Pacificatorum effigies describitur ad alterutrum litigantium manum alternatim extendens, ut junctis dextris pacis fœdus iniretur. Quintil.

First, He put forth his hand towards the parties, desiring them to joyn hands, or (as we speak) to shake hands and be friends. Joyning hands signifies consent (Exod. 27. 1.) *Thou shalt not put thy hand with the wicked*; that is, thou shalt make no agreement with him. Some of the Ancients describe the *Pacificatour* or *Dayes-man*, having his hands closed into the hands of those between whom he was to make peace: Hence they who are unfaithful

faithful in Covenant, are ſaid to have a *lying* or a *deceitful right-hand*. The Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaking of a falſe worſhipper, who had engaged his faith to ſerve Idols, concludes, *He feedeth of aſhes, a deceived heart hath turned him aſide that he cannot deliver his ſoul, nor ſay, Is there not a lie in my right-hand?* (Iſa. 44. 20) or (as others tranſlate) *Is there not a lie at my right-hand?* noting, that the Idol to which he had given his heart and hand, would deceive him moſt when he truſted moſt to it.

Quibus nulla fœderis ſervati fides mendacem dextram habere dicuntur.

Secondly, The *Dayes-man* eying the temper or diſtemper, both of the complainant and defendant, laid his hand gently now upon one, and then upon another, uſing his beſt Rhetorick to perſwade, yea to conjure them to peace and quietneſs; Sir, ſaid he, to one, I beſeech you to accept of theſe terms and conditions, 'tis you that have done the wrong, and treſpaſſed againſt your neighbour; and preſently he beſpake the other, that he would paſs by the offence, heal the breach, forget the injury, or take reaſonable ſatisfaction for his damage.

שׁוּת *Cum quadam attentione, ſtudio & induſtria ponere Arbiter meduus inter litigantes benigne manum nunc ſuper hanc nunc ſuper illam ponere ſolebat, dicens, Tum hoc hallucinaris tu vero bene egiſti ſed hoc & hoc facere non debuiſti.* Bold.

Thirdly, The *Dayes-man* giving ſentence, laid his hand upon the head of him whom he found faulty, and to have done the wrong, in token of condemnation. Among the Ceremonies of conſecrating the Levitical Prieſts, this is given in command, (Exod. 29.10.) *Thou ſhalt cauſe a bullock to be brought before the Tabernacle of the Congregation: and Aaron and his ſons ſhall put their hands upon the head of the bullock:* And in the rules given concerning the burnt offerings of the people, it is directed, that the *bringer ſhall lay his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering*, &c. (*Levit.* 1.4.) Now this laying of their hands upon the head of the Sacrifice, implied the laying of their ſins upon the head of the Sacrifice, and that, the laying of their ſins upon the head of Chriſt, on whom the Prophet aſſures us, *The Lord laid the iniquity of us all* (Iſa. 53.6.) And as the laying on of the hand upon the head of the beaſt tranſferr'd their ſins upon him, ſo likewiſe that ſentence of death and condemnation which was due to their ſin, and was preſently executed by ſlaying of the beaſt: which was a lively type of Chriſt (the Lamb ſlain from the beginning of the world) dying under a ſentence of condemnation in the ſtead of ſinners

Laſtly, The laying on of the hand, notes the keeping of the parties in compaſs, for contenders uſe to be very violent one againſt another.

Thus

Thus to the present text, The laying on of the hand signifies only the composing or compounding of a difference. When *Job* complained or affirmed only, *There is no Dayes-man betwixt us*; his meaning was, that there was no man who could take up the matter betwixt God and him, there was none such to be found, for he speaks not only (*De facto*) that there was no *Dayes-man*, but (*de impossibili*) as of a thing which was impossible to be; As if he had said, *I would gladly refer this matter to arbitration, but the Lord, who is engaged with me, is above the arbitration of men or Angels; Creatures may not meddle with any of his matters further then they are called and I know not of any whom God hath called to, or appointed over this matter.*

Non potest dari Deo mihique simul litiganti-bus arbiter: quasi in Deum æquè ac in me potestatem exercendo.

Hence observe,

First, *When controversies arise, the rule of love bids us refer our differences to the determination of brethren.*

Job speaks according to the usage of those dayes; men did not presently run to law, and call one another before the Judge, they had *Dayes-men* and *Umpires* to determine matters between them. Thus *Jacob* bespeaks *Laban* (Gen. 31. 37.) *Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy houshold stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.* The Apostle (1 *Cor.* 6.1,5.) is very angry with the *Corinthians*, because they were so hasty to go to Law, *Verily there is utterly a fault among you, because you go to law one with another*; What! is there not a *Dayes-man* among you? Is there not a man among you fit to be an *Arbitratour? I speak to your shame* (saith *Paul*) *Is it so that there is not a wise man among you, no not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.* The sin of these *Corinthians* was the greater, because the Judges were Heathen, yet such contendings bear a proportion of sinfulness, though Judges be Christians. To bring every matter to the judgment seat, when (possibly) a brother or a friend might take up the matter, is a transgression against the law of love. We should rather labour after reconcilements, then sutes in Law, which are a cause, not only of trouble and expence, but of great breaches and heart-burnings among friends and brethren. We have a proverbial speech among us, *A lean Arbitration is better then a fat Judgment.* It is better to the parties, they shall get more by it, the charge of obtaining right by law, many times eating

In proverbio est potiores esse iniquas pacis conditiones optimæ judicii sententia

ing out all, and sometimes more then all, alwayes a considerable part of that which the Law gives us as our right. We use to say to dissenters, *Be friends, the Law is costly.* Tis very costly to most mens purses, and to some mens consciences. *'Tis rare, if a man wrongs not his soul by seeking the rights of his credit or estate.*

Secondly observe, *That no creature can umpire the business betwixt God and man:*

There is a two-fold reason of it.

Oportet ut in judice sit altior sapientia, quæ sit qua regula, ad quam examinantur dicta utriusque partis.

First, He that is our Umpire is supposed wiser then our selves. They who cannot agree need more wisdom then their own to work their agreement. But there is no creature wise as God, yea, there is no creature wise but God; who is therefore called, *The God only wise.* God is best able to judge of his own actions. No man hath been his *Counsellour* (Rom. 11.34.) much less shall any man be his Judge: Men sometimes abound too much in their own sense, but God must abound in his. His will is the rule of all, much more his wisdom; or rather his wisdom is the rule of all, because his will is; his will and wisdom being the same, and of the same extent, both infinite.

Oportet ut in judice sit major potestas, quæ possit utramque partem comprimere.

Secondly, He that is a *Dayes-man* or *Umpire*, must (according to the rules before spoken of) have power to compel the parties to submit or stand to what he shall determine. But as we cannot lay any restraint upon God, from doing what he will; so we cannot lay any constraint upon him, to do what we will. Who shall force the Lord? To whom hath he given an *Assumpsit*, or ingaged himself under a penalty to perform what he shall award? The Lord doth whatsoever he pleaseth both in heaven and earth, and he will do no more then he pleaseth. Perswasion cannot move him, much less can power compel him. He that is above all in power, cannot be dealt with any way, but by perswasion. And he who is above all in wisdom, cannot be perswaded by any against his own will.

There is indeed a *Dayes man* betwixt God and man, but God himself hath appointed him. God hath referred the differences betwixt himself and man unto *Jesus Christ*; and (his own good will and free grace moving him thereunto) he stands engaged in the bonds of his everlasting truth and faithfulness to perform what *Jesus Christ*, as Mediatour, should ask for us: unto him we may safely commit our cause and our souls, with that assurance of the Apostle

Apostle (2 Tim. 1. 12.) *I know whom I have believed, and am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* Christ, God-man, is Umpire between God and man; what we trust him with shall not miscarry: he will make our cause good, and our persons acceptable before God at that great day. It is infinite mercy, when we were neither able to manage our own cause, nor to find out any in heaven or earth who could, that then God himself should find out one, in wisdom and power like himself, one who *thought it no robbery to be equal with God* to be our *Dayes-man*. Many of the Ancients interpret this Text, either as *Jobs* desire and prayer, that Christ would come in the flesh, *O that there were a Dayes-man betwixt us*: or as a prophecy of Jesus Christ, to come as our *Dayes-man* in the flesh, *There is no Dayes-man yet, but a Dayes-man shall come*. The sense is pious, but the context will not bear it; in the 16th. Chapter, v. 21. and chap. 17. v. 3. We shall find *Job* speaking clearly of the Mediatour Jesus Christ, and of his great work of atonement between God and man. But here he seems to keep to th present controversie, about the business of affliction, not of salvation.

Take two or three consectaries flowing from the whole matter.

First, *Job* at the lowest speaks highly of God, and humbly of himself. *The greater his afflictions were the purer was his language.* He was not able to grapple with God, and there was none to be found who could umpire the matter betwixt them. *The will of God is the supreme law.* What he will do with us, we must be content he should. The secrets of his providence are beyond our search, and his judgments above our reach.

Secondly, *The greatness and transcendency of God should keep us low in our own thoughts.*

Our knowledge of God is the present cure of our own pride. The knowledge of God causeth us to know our selves, and that which makes us know our selves, cannot but make us low in our selves. Though a proud man is commonly said, *To know himself too much*, yet the truth is, he doth not know himself enough, no, nor at all, as he should know himself. *Many are proud of, and with their knowledge, yet pride is the daughter of ignorance.* Some pride lodges in every mans heart, because more then some ignorance doth. *Job* had some of both in his; why doth he lay the thought of the infinite glory and soveraignty of God so often to

his heart, but to keep down or to cure the ſwellings of his heart.

Thirdly, *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God.*

He is not a man as we are (we are not able to match him) and *there is* (among men) *no Dayes-man betwixt us.* *David* made it his election (2 Sam. 24.) *To fall into the hands of God, and not into the hands of man.* And it is beſt for us to fall into the hands of God (as *David* put himſelf into his hands) with reſpect to his great mercies. But woe unto us, if we fall into his hands, as contenders with his great power. Shall we thus provoke the Lord? Are we ſtronger then he? It is our duty, when we do, and our priviledge that we may, caſt our ſelves into the hands of God, when the hand of man oppreſſes us; for (as one of the Ancients ſpeaks ſweetly and feelingly) *If thou doeſt depoſit thy injuries with him, he is able to revenge thee; if thy loſſes, he is able to repair thee; if thy ſickneſs, he is able to heal thee; and if thy death, he can raiſe thee up and eſtate thee in life again.* Thus (I ſay) it is beſt to fall into the hands of God, in expectation of mercy, through the Mediatour, but it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, upon contempt of mercy obtained by the Mediatour: So the Apoſtle argues (Heb. 10. 26.) *If men ſin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation,* &c. Thence concluding, (verſ. 31.) *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* They who ſleight the bloud of Chriſt, and neglect the great ſalvation tendered to ſinners by him, can have no more ſacrifice for ſin. Wicked men *crucifie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him to open ſhame,* Heb. 6. 6. But God will not crucifie his Son, or put him to open ſhame again for them. God will not make another Goſpel for them (as he muſt, if they be ſaved) who contemn this. No, there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin, theſe men who once (with all mankind) fell into the hands of God by tranſgreſſing his Law, are now (under another notion) fallen into his hands, even by the contempt of his Goſpel; and now God ſaith, I will deal with them alone, for they have refuſed the Dayes-man whom I ſent, and who was ready to *lay his hand upon us both.* It had been unconceivably ſad with us all, if, as in the caſe of *Jobs* temporal loſt eſtate, there was no *Dayes-man* between God and him on earth, ſo in the caſe of our ſpiritual loſt eſtate, there had been

Satis idonea eſt patientiæ ſequeſter Deus, ſi injuriam depoſuerit juxta eum, ultor eſt; ſi damnum, reſtitutor; ſi dolorem, medicus; & mortem, reſuſcitator eſt. Tertul. *l. de Patient.*

no

no *Dayes-man* between God and man in Heaven: But it will be unconceivably more sad with those, who having had the tender of such a *Dayes-man*, shall be found contemners of him. *Greatest love neglected, breaks forth and ends in greatest wrath.*

שבט *Baculus vel virga ad percutiendum*
משענ *Virga vel baculus ad sustentandum.*

JOB Chap. 9. Vers. 34, 35.

Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me.
Then would I speak, and not fear him; but it is not so with me.

WE have shewed (in the two former verses) *Job* renouncing and protesting against all thought of contending at all with God; *He is not a man as I am, that I should answer him*, &c. In these two he desireth God not to contend with him: as if he had said, *Lord, I will not plead or dispute with thee; and I know (such is thy soveraignty) thou mayest do what thou pleasest with me; Yet, oh that thou wouldest be pleased to abate of the severity of thy proceeding, and to remit the fierceness of that wrath, wherein thou appearest against me, that I might have liberty to spread my condition in thy presence. I have no friend to take up the matter for me; but I would open my case in a few words my self, if I might obtain a cessation, but for the time of treaty, if thou wouldst forbear fighting, while I am speaking. Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me. Then would I speak*, &c.

Nihil aliud postulat Iob, quam ut Deus vel mitigaret, vel penitus auferret ab eo flagella, sc. morbos & dolores. Non agat pro jure, sed gratiæ & moderationi faciat locum. Coc.

Let him take his rod away from me.

The rod hath divers acceptions. The word *Shabet* in the Hebrew, is taken sometimes strictly for a branch, bough or sprig, growing forth from the stock of a tree: and because a rod or a staff is made of the branch of a tree, therefore the same word signifies both.

Secondly, It signifies a *Scepter*; the Scepter of a King, which emblems the power of a King. *Ahasuerus* held forth his golden Scepter to Queen *Esther*, in token of acceptance (*Esth.* 5. 2). And because in ancient times (as the learned observe) they

were wont to make Scepters of ſuch rods, and all Scepters have the form or ſhape of a rod, therefore the original expreſſes the rod and the Scepter by the ſame word (Gen. 49.10.) *The Scepter* [Shebet, *the rod*] *ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his feet. Thy Scepter, O God, is a Scepter of righteouſneſs* (Pſal. 45. 6.) that is, thou uſeſt thy Scepter righteouſly. The Scepter notes two things. 1. Authority to judge or command. 2. Power to correct or puniſh; both are included in that prophecy of the Kingdom of Chriſt (Pſal 110.2.) *The Lord ſhall ſend the rod of thy ſtrength out of Sion*; that is, he ſhall inveſt thee with power to govern, as the next words expound it, *Rule thou in the midſt of thine enemies.* Commanders in war direct with a rod or *leading-ſtaffe*; and Magiſtrates puniſh with a rod in times of peace.

Satis idoneus eſt patientiæ ſequeſter Deus, ſi injuriam depoſuerit juxta eum, ultor eſt; ſi damnum, reſtitutor; ſi dolorem, medicus; ſi mortem, reſuſcitator eſt. Tertul. *l. de Patient.*

Hence thirdly, By a Metonymy the Scepter imports dominion, rule and government it ſelf, Amos. 1.8. *I will cut off him that holdeth the Scepter*, that is, who hath the government in his hand.

Fourthly, The word is often uſed in Scripture to ſignifie a *Tribe*, or a family of perſons, becauſe a tribe is as a branch ſprung from one ſtock; ſo the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael* (like twelve branches) ſprung from that great and ancient ſtock, the *Patriarch Jacob.*

Laſtly, The word ſignifies puniſhment or correction; correction is often given with a rod, therefore *to be under the rod is to be under puniſhment.* Thus the Lord threatens to viſit the tranſgreſſion of the houſe of *David* with a *rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes*, Pſal. 89.32. *The rod and reproof give wiſdom* (Prov. 29.15.) The rod hath a voice, *Hear the rod* (ſaith the Prophet, *Mic.* 6.9.) but 'tis beſt when a voice is joyned with the rod, and inſtruction mixed with correction.

There are in the Hebrew (to note that by the way) five words, which ſignifie a rod or a ſtaff. Some reſolve that ſeeming contradiction which is in the two Evengeliſts, *Matthew* and *Mark*, by the different ſignification of theſe words. When Chriſt (*Matth.* 10 10. as alſo, *Luke* 9 3.) ſent forth his Apoſtles to preach the Goſpel, among other inſtructions and directions given them for their journey, this is one, *Take no ſtaves.* But (Mar 6.8.) *Chriſt commanded them that they ſhould take nothing for their journey, ſave a ſtaff only.* One Evangeliſt ſaith, they muſt not take ſtaves, and in the other they are bidden to take ſtaves. Now (ſay theſe) in *Matthew* and *Luke*, where he forbids his

Diſciples

Diſciples to take ſtaves, he expreſſeth himſelf by the word in the text, *Shebet*, which ſignifies a correcting or ſmiting ſtaff: Take no ſtaves to ſmite and ſtrike with, ye go out with a meſſage of peace in your mouths, let there not be ſo much as an inſtrument of contention in your hands. But in *Mark* he uſeth the word *Miſnan*, which ſignifies a ſtaff to lean upon, Take a ſtaff to reſt or eaſe your ſelves upon, or to help your ſelves on in your travel, *A walking ſtaff, but not a ſtriking ſtaff.* Thus they reconcile the difference. But though this interpretation be good, yet this ground of it appears not, either in the Syriack, which in both texts hath the word *Shebet*, or in the Greek, which expreſſes both by (ῥάβδον:) So then we muſt rather ſay, that the ſame word ſignifies a ſtaff for both uſes, and that when Chriſt forbids his Diſciples a ſtaff, he means a ſtaff to ſtrike with (*Preachers muſt be no ſtrikers*, according to the Apoſtles rule in *Timothy*) and that when he bids them take a ſtaff, he means a walking ſtaff. *Itenerint Preachers might be wearied with travelling, as well as with ſpeaking.*

שׁבט *Baculus vel virga ad percutiendum*
משענ *Virga vel baculus ad ſuſtentandum.*

But to the Text. The rod which *Job* deſires might be removed, is, That ſore affliction which the ſoveraign power of God laid upon him, and exerciſed him with. As if he had ſaid, *Lord, thou dealeſt with me upon the height of thy prerogative, and I acknowledge thou mayeſt do ſo: But my humble ſute and prayer is, that thou wouldeſt afflict me leſs then thou haſt, though thou haſt not afflicted me more then thou mayeſt. Thou haſt not injured me at all, but O that thou wouldeſt relieve me.*

Nihil aliud poſtulat Iob, quam ut Deus vel mittigares, vel penitus auferret ab eo flagella, ſc. morbos & dolores.

He ſpeaks to this ſenſe with a little variety of words (Chap. 13. 20,21.) *Only do not two things unto me, then will I not hide my ſelf from thee; withdraw thine hand from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid.* And in a language not unlike this, he deſcribes the peace and proſperity of wicked men (Chap. 21. 9.) *Their houſes are ſafe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.* We find alſo that *Elihu* (who undertook *Job*, and debated the matter with him, when *theſe three* had no more to ſay, or would ſay no more.) He, I ſay, perceiving what it was which *Job* had complained of as an impediment of ſpeaking unto God, promiſes that himſelf would give him no ſuch impediment or cauſe of complaint (Chap. 33.7.) *Behold, my terrour ſhall not make thee afraid, neither ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee*; As if he had ſaid, The Lords hand hath been heavy upon thee, and his terrour

Non agat pro jure, ſed gratiæ & moderationi faciat locum. Coc.

terrour hath made thee afraid, but (take my word) I will deal gently and mildly with thee, *My terrour shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.* So that *Jobs* desire is only this, That he might have ease or release from his present sorrows. And 'tis (not improbably) conceived, that he alludes to the custom of the Judges in those Eastern Countries, who laid a rod upon some offenders in token of condemnation, and took it off from others in token of absolution, of grace and favour. *Take thy rod away from me.*

Affliction is called a rod in a three-fold consideration.

1. Because of the smart of it. *Afflictions are grievous and painful to flesh and blood.* They grieve and pain the outward man, while the inward man takes pleasure in them. I (saith *Paul*) *take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in persecutions, in necessities, in distresses for Christs sake* (2 Cor. 12. 10.) that is, my spirit doth, for no affliction (not that for Christs sake) is joyous for the present, but grievous to the flesh. For, as the Spirit would not do those evils of sin, which the flesh would and doth, (*The evil which I would not, that I do*, was *Pauls* cry, *Rom.* 7. 19.) So the flesh would not endure those evils of sorrow, which the Spirit would and doth. And as a believer delights in the Law of God, after the inward man, when corruption is vext and troubled at it; so a believer delights in the rod of God, after the inward man, when corruption is most impatient and unquiet under it. Hence the Apostles counsel to the dispersed Jews, *Rejoyce when ye fall into divers temptations* (Jam. 1.) that is, into divers afflictions; the flesh hath its sense, and feels smart; but the Spirit is armed with faith, which overcomes the smart. Affliction were not so much as a rod, if it did not make us smart; and we are not so much as Christians, if we cannot bear the smart with patience, or overcome it with faith.

2. Affliction is called a Rod, in regard of the hand that useth it. A sword is in the hand of a Judge, and a Rod in the hand of a father. God deals with his people as a father with his children in afflicting them. When we most provoke his fatherly displeasure against us, he doth not wish (as *Balaam* when his Ass offended him) that there were a sword in his hand to slay us; he only takes up a rod to scourge us. Hence.

3. Affliction is called a rod, in regard of the end for which it is sent. A rod is not prepared to kill, nor is it an instrument of cruelty.

cruelty. A rod is not for destruction, but for correction. There are indeed destroying rods, which God will destroy, and save his people who are destroyed by them, *I will destroy the rod of the oppressour* (Isa. 9. 4.) *Nebuchadnezzar the rod of Gods anger*, was a destroying rod, yet they among the Jews, who feared God, were only corrected, while they were destroyed. *The Lord means no hurt to those who are good, when he makes them smart and die under the rod of those who are evil.* If ever any man might think he had a sword in his bowels, rather then a rod upon his back, *Job* might, yet even he calls it a rod, while he calls to God for the removing of it, *Remove thy rod away from me:* And seeing he calls to have it removed, we may observe,

That it is lawful for to pray against affliction.

We may pray to be eased of that, which we must be patient under. To be discontented with affliction is sinful, but it is no sin (it is a duty) to desire the taking of it away. For

1. We may pray for the preventing of afflictions, therefore we may pray for the removing of afflictions, we may pray, *Lord, keep thy rod off from us*; therefore we may pray, *Lord, take thy rod off from us.*

2. Afflictions themselves are evil. There is no good in them, nor can they do us any good of themselves. The good cometh from a superiour work, from those admirable influences and concurrences of God upon, and with corrections. The rod is an evil in it self, and will make us worse, unless the Lord make it a blessing to us. Some are stubborn under the rod: and their hearts are hardened, while themselves are melted in the fire of affliction. As man lives not by bread alone: So man mends not by the rod alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 'Tis little less then a miracle that this dry rod (as that of *Aaron* did natural) should blossom and bring forth spiritual fruit, the fruits of righteousness.

3. We may pray for the removing of afflictions, because the Lord often sends afflictions upon this message, to bespeak prayer. Many a soul is sluggish in prayer till awakened by the voice of the rod. When the rod makes the flesh smart, then the Spirit (in whom any thing of the Spirit is) cries mightily unto God, and among the many things about which the soul exercises prayer under afflictions, this is one, that the affliction may be removed. As they alwayes sin, who murmur at and quarrel with God, because

cause he corrects them, so also do they, who say, they care not how long he corrects them, or let him correct them, as long as he will. It is as ill a sign when a child will not pray his parent to spare him, when he is about to chasten him, or to stay his hand when he is chastening of him, as it is to resist his chastisement. *There may be greater contempt of God in lying under affliction, then in resisting it.* Now, as it is our duty to pray for deliverance out of trouble; so it is one end why the Lord casts us into trouble, that we may be engaged to pray for deliverance.

But take it with a caution, we must not pray absolutely for deliverance, or the removal of afflictions, but at least with an implicit limitation. While we are striving earnestly for the taking away of the rod, we should be ready to submit, if the Lord will not take it away. A believer may say to the Lord (as wrestling *Jacob*) *I will not let thee go except thou bless me*; but he must not say, I will not let thee go, *except thou now deliver me.* Time, and means, and manner must all be laid at Gods feet, and submitted to his wisdom. And we must honour God, though he will not remove the rod, even while we are praying that he would remove it.

For the close of this point consider, the rod may be removed, not only by a total release from affliction; But

First, By an abatement of the affliction; as we are said to leave off those graces, from the degrees and lively actings of which we fall and decline: *He that lacketh these things* (that is, who aboundeth not, as he hath heretofore, in the exercise of them) is *blind*, &c. (2 Pet. 1. 9.) *Thou hast left thy first love*, saith Christ to the Angel of *Ephesus*, when the heat of his former love was cooled: So the Lord may be said to remove our troubles, when he remits the extremity, and cools the heat of them.

Secondly, The rod is removed, when it is sanctified to us, when the Lord (who is excellent in working) causeth it to do us good. The Saints die, yet *death is abolished*, as to the Saints, by the death of Christ (2 *Tim.* 1. 10.) because Christ hath pluckt out the sting of their death, and made it again to them. Thus while Christ makes temporal losses or sufferings an advantage to the spiritual estate of his people, he takes them away. And as outward blessings are taken away, from wicked men, while they possess them, riches are not riches to them, nor is their honour an honour to them, because they are ensnared by them: So the outward cross

is

is taken away from the godly, while they suffer, because they are bettered by the cross.

Thirdly, Affliction is removed from us, when Christ gives us strength to bear affliction. Nothing grieves us, either in active or passive obedience, but what is either against our wills, or above our power: It is all one to have a burthen taken off our shoulders, or to have so much strength given, as makes it easie to us. While the Saints have trouble upon their backs and loins, they have no trouble in their hearts and spirits, when their spirits are carried above those troubles. *To conquer an enemy is more noble then to have none.* Much more (which is promised the Saints in the throng of sorest enemies) to be more then conquerours. In all, or any of these wayes, *Jobs* prayer may be fulfilled, *Take away thy rod from me.*

And let not thy fear terrifie me.

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There was somewhat more upon *Job* then a rod, or it was an extraordinary rod, a rod like a Scorpion.

Formidabilis, terribilis. Emathah.

Let not thy fear terrifie me.

The word which we translate [*fear*] comes from a root signifying that which is very formidable and terrible. *Fear and dread shall fall upon them* (Exod. 15.16.) that is, they shall be extremely afraid, even dead with fear, as the next words import, *They shall be still as a stone*, &c. There is a letter added as the Hebricians observe) to the word used by *Moses*, implying the excess of fear. Giants are called by this name *Emims* Deut. 2.11. because they are of a dreadful aspect. The whole host of *Israel* trembled at the sight of *Goliah* (1Sa.17.24.) An Idol is expresst by this name *Emim*, And there is a double reason of it. Either because Idols are a terrour to their worshippers: we hear how at this day *poor Pagans*, who worship Idols, are extremely oppresst with slavish fear of displeasing them. *The true God is terrible to his despisers; but false Gods are terrible to their worshippers.*

μη με εκφοβειτω, ne me transversum agat. Sept. *aliur, ne me consternet.*

Or secondly, They were called *Emims* in a way of contempt; *Yours are terrible Gods sure? They have hands and handle not, feet and walk not, eyes and see not.* Here are terrible gods. So then Idols are *Emims*, either because they are really to be feared so little; or because they are superstitiously feared so much.

Ex vi verbi originalis ejusmodi terror est qui hominem exagitat & quasi extra se valde distrahat.

Jobs fear was no needless fear, he was not terrified with a fancy, though his fancy was ready enough to over-act upon his affliction, and so encreased his fear; *Let not thy fear*, that is (say some) fearful thoughts or sights *terrifie me.* So (Chap. 7. 14.) *When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint, then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me with visions.* There is an humbling and a cleansing fear; *The fear of the Lord is clean*, not only in the nature of it, but in the effects of it (Psal. 19. 9.) There is also an amazing, and a terrifying fear, such the letter of the original imports this to be, even a fear bordering upon madness, as if he were rather frighted then afraid, and scared, rather then troubled.

Others expound this fear with reference to the two former verses, especially to the verse immediately foregoing. There *Job* desires a *Dayes-man*, or complains that there is none; here he tells us what he might have expected, if he had one. As if he had said, *Had I a Dayes-man, then I know he would take away the rod from me, that is, he would give judgment that I should be eased of this affliction; and his fear should not terrifie me, that is, he would never give a sentence which should be a terrour to me.* That's a fair sense in reference to what he spake before; but I rather keep his meaning within the compass of what he is speaking here.

Per vim nomine intelligendum putarem fulgorem, splendorem vel majestatem illam, qua prisco illo temporibus nonnunquam Deus vel Angelus pro Deo servo suo apparebat. Bol.

And then by fear we may understand,

First, Those rayes and beams of Majesty, which the Lord letting out a little upon *Job*, he was not able to bear them. We find when in those ancient times God appeared, the beholders were terrified. *Manoahs* wife tells her husband, *A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an Angel of God, very terrible* (Judg. 13. 6.) And when God appeared to *Abraham*, *An horrour of great darkness fell upon him* (Gen. 15. 12.) in what a woful plight was *Daniel*, receiving the visions of God? (*Dan.* 10. 8.) God who is the joy of his people, is also a terrour to them. Things which are not what they seem to be, are not so terrible near hand as at a distance; God who is infinitely more then he can seem to be, is more terrible near hand then at a distance. Hence it is, that when God, who is alwayes near us, shews himself to be so, our spirits fail within us. In that presence of God which we shall have in glory, there will be fulness of joy. And in that presence of God which we have in the wayes of grace, there is abundance of joy. But if while we are here in a state

ſtate of grace, ſome little of that preſence of God, which is proper to the ſtate of glory falls upon us, we are more diſtr ſi d then comforted with it. How much more then, when God clothes himſelf with terrour, and (as he did to *Job*) ſo reveals himſelf unto us.

Secondly, We may interpret *this fear* (by the former part of the verſe) the *rod*; his afflictions were terrible, the hand of God lifted up to ſmite him, made him afraid. But whether it were this or that, the majeſty of God over-awing him, or the rod of God chaſtening him, the ſenſe is plain, *Job* was oppreſt with fear from the Lord, yea with terrour from the Almighty, cauſing this vehement deprecation, *Let not his fear terrifie me*. Hence obſerve,

Firſt, That, *God ſometimes appears terribly to thoſe he loves entirely.*

Job was one of Gods darlings; and God was imbracing him, while he was ſcourging him. *Job* had kiſſes from heaven, when he felt nothing but lathes here upon the earth. The heart of God was full of love, while his hand was filled with a rod; his bowels yearn'd upon *Job*, and his face terrified him at the ſame time. That precious man *Heman*, was followed with terrours and viſions of amazement all his dayes, *I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up, while I ſuffer thy terrours I am diſtracted* (*Pſal.* 88.15.) The terrours of God, even terrours to diſtraction, may be the preſent portion of thoſe, whoſe portion is everlaſting mercy. Obſerve,

Secondly, *Man is not able to bear the anger of God.*

Though he be but correcting us, yet we cannot bear his anger toward us. This cauſed the Prophet to cry out (*Jer.* 10. 24) *Correct me, O Lord, but not in thine anger.* The words are not a prayer for correction (I know no warrant for that) but a ſubmiſſion to it. As if he had ſaid, Lord, I am willing to bear thy correction, but I cannot (and who can? bear thine anger. The Church complains (*Pſal.* 90. 7.) *We are conſumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath we are troubled* The fatherly anger of God, is as a conſuming fire, and we are but as ſtubble before it: What then is the fierceneſs of that anger, which he will pour out upon wicked men for ever! *Who knoweth the power of thine anger?* (*Pſal.* 90 11.) Man cannot underſtand how powerful the anger of God is, much leſs ſtand before the power of his anger. As

man cannot comprehend the love of God (*Epheſ* 3. 18,19.) The Apoſtle exhorts, *To know the love of God which paſſeth knowledge*; that is, to know ſo much of it as is knowable; (the love of God is paſt the knowledge, not only of nature, but of grace, becauſe it is infinite) So we ſhould labour, *To know the anger of God, which paſſeth knowledge*, that is, to know it ſo far as it is knowable. The anger of God cannot be fully known, becauſe it hath an infiniteneſs in it, as well as his love. And as the one ſhall never be fully known, but by enjoying it; ſo neither can the other, but by feeling it. Upon this conſideration the Lord makes that gracious promiſe to his people (Iſa. 57. 16.) I *will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wroth, for the ſpirit ſhould fail before me, and the ſouls which I have made.* But is not the ſpirit or ſoul of man of an everlaſting make? And ſhall not the damned endure the contendings of Gods wrath for ever, and not fail? The ſubſtance of the ſoul cannot fail, and the ſpirit is incorruptible; The ſpirit is full of moral corruption, but is it not ſubject to natural corruption, or the corruption of its nature. How glad would the damned be, if their ſpirits might fail, and their ſouls return to nothing. The failing of the ſpirit under the wrath of God, is the failing of its hope and courage. Thus the ſpirit ſinks, and the immortal ſoul dies away under the ſenſe and weight of Gods diſpleaſure.

But what if the Lord ſhould take away his rod, and change his terrours into ſmiles? What will *Job* do then? when this is granted, ſee what he will do.

Verſe 35. *Then would I ſpeak, and not fear him; but it is not ſo with me.*

οὐκ μὴ φοβηθῶ, ἀλλὰ λαλήσω. *Sept.*

But is this the uſe which *Job* would make of the mercy he begs? Doth he entreat the Lord to take his terrifying fear away from him, and then reſolve not to fear him at all? Whoſe voice is this? Is this the Voice of *Job*; *I will ſpeak and not fear him? Jobs* character in the firſt Chapter was, *A man fearing God*; and dares he now ſay, *I will ſpeak and not fear him?* As the fear of God ought to be the ſeaſoning of all our works and actions, ſo it ought to be the ſeaſoning of all our words and ſpeeches: why then doth he ſay, *I will ſpeak and not fear him?*

To clear this, I anſwer, Fear may be taken two wayes. Either for the grace of fear, or for the perturbation of fear. When *Job* ſaith

saith, *I would speak and not fear him*, his meaning is not to lay down that fear of God, which is a bridle to the soul, keeping it from sin, or that reverential affection, which fits us for, and should act us in every holy duty we perform to God. When *Job* prayed to be free from the fear of God, he resolved thus to fear God. 'Tis only the perturbation of fear, distracting fear, not sanctifying, humbling fear, which *Job* would lay aside, when God should please to withdraw his terrifying fear. And so his mind is plainly this, *If the Lord will be entreated to remit the extremiey of my affliction, and remove those terrours wherewith I am affrighted, then I would speak boldly and chearfully to him, I would set out the truth of my case, and declare the innocency of my person. Vehement passions hinder my reason, 'tis uneasie to speak, till I am eased of my pains: I cannot tell how it is with me, so long as it is thus with me.* Hence note.

Qui in judicio consternatur non potest recte agere causam suam, seque ita ut oportet defendere ac tueri, terror enim impedimento est ei. Pined.

That extremity of fear is an interruption to speech.

While sense is much troubled, reason cannot act much. *When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel* (Hos. 13. 1.) There, to speak trembling, is, to speak humbly. Our words to God should be accompanied with low thoughts of our selves. *Ephraims* trembling is opposed to pride and hardness of heart. They who thus tremble at the Word of God, are fittest to speak to God; yet excessive trembling hinders us in speaking. And until the Lord quiets and composes our hearts by a word from heaven; till he speak to our distempered minds, as once to the raging sea, Be quiet and still; we cannot utter our hearts, or declare our minds unto him. When God sends a gracious message to poor sinners, and invites them to a conference, as he did his ancient people (Isai. 1. 18.) *Come, let us reason together*; then they come boldly to the throne of grace, notwithstanding their crimson and scarlet sins; then they are not afraid to speak, they may speak and not fear him.

But (saith *Job*) *it is not so with me.*

לֹא־כֵן עִמָּדִי אָנֹכִי

Quia non sic ego mecum.

οὐ γὰρ οὕτως ἐπίσταμαι

Non enim sic conscius sum.

There is much diversity of opinion about these words. M. *Broughton* translates, *I am not so with my self*: and gives this note upon it, *I am not such with my self, as Gods scourge seemeth to make me, or such as your words would make me.* The Septuagint renders it, *I am not so conscious to my self, or I am not so self-guilty.* The Hebrew word for word runs thus, *For not so I with my self.*

Some

Some difference ariſes from the firſt particle, we read [*But*] Moſt [*For*] The original is rather caſual then exceptive, *I would ſpeak and not fear him, for it is not ſo with me.*

Particula Chen *propter variam quam habet ſignificationem, variis quoque interpretationibus anſam præbet, eſt enim vox æquivoca plura ſignificans.* Bol.

But the word which cauſes the greateſt difference, is that which we tranſlate [*So*] *It is not ſo with me.* The Hebrew is *Chen*, and that hath two principal ſignifications. It ſignifies ſometimes *right* or juſt, and is applied both to perſons, and to things.

Qui bonam habet conſcientiam (בן) *rectam apud ipſum: reſtatur igitur ſe bonam habere conſcientiam eo inde quòd apud Deum, ſi non pro jure ſuo agere, vel gratia uti velit.* Coc.

Firſt, Unto things, Jer. 8.6. *The Lord hearkned and heard, and there was no man that ſpake* (*Chen*) aright; or things which were right, *Jer.* 23.10. The word is oppoſed to evil, *Their courſe is evil, and their force is not right*; that is, the force, might or power which they have, is not ſet upon or imployed about that which is right, but wholly bent to do wrong; or they commit evil with all their might.

Secondly, The word [*Chen*] is applied unto perſons, noting a man that is upright hearted, faithful and honeſt, both in conſcience and converſation. When *Joſephs* brethren (*Gen* 42.11,19,31.) pleaded for themſelves, they ſay unto him, We are (*Chenim*, *right men, we are no ſpies.* We are not come to find out the weakneſs of the Land, but to get a ſupply of our own wants. *Joſeph* ſaid, *Ye are ſpies*, ye come to circumvent us, to put tricks upon us, to work your own ends, by diſcovering what we are; No, ſay they, pray, Sir, do not miſunderſtand us, we are (*Chenim*, honeſt, right-hearted, plain-meaning men.

Secondly, The word is uſed adverbially, *It is not ſo with me*, that is, It is not ſo as you imagine. In which ſenſe we find it, Gen. 1.7. *The Lord ſaid, Let there be light, and it was* (Chen) *ſo*, as the Lord commanded, ſo it was, Eccleſ. 8.10. *I ſaw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were ſtrangers in the City, where they had done ſo.*

Upon both theſe ſignifications of the word, different interpretations of the whole are grounded.

Firſt, Taking the word to note an upright hearted man, *Job* is conceived to ſpeak interrogatively, as if he put this Queſtion, *For am I not right in my ſelf?* As if he had ſaid, *If you think it too much boldneſs that I have ſaid I would ſpeak unto God, and not fear him, Am not I right in my ſelf? Am not I ſound and true at heart?* Thus he ſeems to allude unto that teſtimony, which God gave of him at the firſt verſe of this book, *A man perfect and upright*; As if he had ſaid, *I am no turn-coat or apoſtate, I am as I was,*

and

and I *doubt not but* I *shall be what* I *am; still perfect before God, and upright with men. And if so, why may not* I *have boldness to come unto God, and speak freely with him? They who are sincere with God, may have great boldness in coming unto God.* Uprightness hath boldness with men; and uprightness hath boldness towards God. Though no uprightness or righteousness in man can give him boldness in himself, yet it may give him boldness in another. He may be assured, that though he cannot be *accepted for his uprightness, yet being upright he shall be accepted.*

Secondly, Others read it negatively, I *would speak, and not fear him, for* I *am not right in, or with my self.* And so the sense may be made out thus, I *have not gone about to justifie my self all this while, I have not stood upon my own righteousness pleading with God; if my righteousness were in my self, then* I *might fear to speak with God, though his fear shou'd not terrifie me, and though he should take away his rod from me; but I have a better bottom then my own,* I *am not right in my self,* I *am right only in the free grace of God, and in the righteousness of my redeemer.* According to this exposition he returneth to his first proposition, laid down in the second verse of this Chapter, *How should man be just or righteous with God?* I *am not right in my self*; as I said in the beginning of my answer, *Man is not righteous*; so I now conclude in my own particular case, I *am not righteous in my self*: and being righteous in another, if God would but give me a little respit from these sorrows, I would speak and not be afraid. This teaches us,

First, *That the confidence and holy boldness which the Saints have in coming unto God, is grounded upon the righteousness of Christ, not upon any worthiness in themselves.*

Secondly, Observe,

He that is most upright in heart, is most forward to acknowledge, and most constant in acknowledging his own unrighteousness. They who are most proud, are most empty. And they who have least, usually speak with the most. Sincerity rates it self low, I *am not right*, that is, *righteous*, saith upright *Job.*

Thirdly, (Say others) I *am not right in my self*; that is, I am at present uncomposed and unsettled in my own spirit: As if *Job* had said, I *desire that the Lord would remove his fear and mitigate my afflictions, that* I *might speak with him and not fear, for as yet* I *am not right in my self, my spirit is so overwhelmed, and my thoughts*

are

Quia non sic sum apud me; ut nunc sum: sc. in hac afflictione uti me nunc tractat & exagitat Deus: sum velut extra me, enimi impos. Merc. *Neque enim metuens possum respondere.* Vul.

are so troubled within me, that I have not the free use of my own understanding, nor can my reason do its office, much less my grace. I am scarce in my right mind, but rather as a man distracted (so was Heman) *with the terrours of the Lord, I know not how to manage faith under such fears, the majesty and dreadfulness of God oppress my spirit, as I am, I am not my self.* The Vulgar gives this interpretation instead of a translation, *For I cannot answer while I am afraid.* Hence note,

A godly man in sore temptations, may for a while appear less then a man.

Fears hinder him from shewing the best of his natural self, much more any thing of his spiritual self.

Further, note two things, experienced by many of the Saints in the day of their distress.

First, *A godly man under greatest afflictions keeps to the opinion of his own integrity, yet builds his comfort upon the free grace of God.*

He can, according to the first interpretation of these words, challenge all with this Question, *Am I not right in my self?* Is there not integrity in my spirit? And according to the second, he is ready to make this negative confession, *I am not right in my self,* I stand not upon my own integrity.

Secondly, *The Saints in great afflictions are often so overwhelmed with the majesty of God, that they are not able to express their interest in God, much less make out the comforts of that interest.*

The former of these arises from that seed of holiness and stock of grace abiding in them. The other ariseth from the natural weakness of flesh and bloud, in which they abide, and from the moral corruption of nature, abiding in them.

Thus we see how the sense of the text rises, as the word [*Chen*] is understood nominally, for *right or just.* We translate it adverbially, *But it is not so with me*; or, *For it is not so with me.* This reading bears a three-fold interpretation.

First, In construction with the former words, thus, *Let him take away his rod, &c. then will I speak, and not fear him, for it is not so with me*; that is, I am not so fearful, or of so low a spirit, I am not such a stranger, or of so little acquaintance with God, that I should not know how to speak unto him, or that I should be afraid to speak unto him. If the Lord would but hide that brightness of his own glory, which dazles me, and ease me of my own pains, which distract me, I should sure enough speak unto him, and declare my cause.

But

But ſecondly, We may rather refer it to the falſe and unkind opinion of his friends, who judged him a wicked man, or an hypocrite, which here he denies, *It is not ſo with me*; as if he had ſaid, *If the Lord would be pleaſed to grant what I have petitioned, I would ſpeak unto him without fear or doubt of being heard, for it is not ſo with me, namely, as you have ſuſpected and imagined all this while, or as you think it is. I am not the man you take, or rather miſtake me to be, if I were, then though the Lord ſhould take all his afflictions from me, and withdraw all his terrours, yet I ſhould be afraid to ſpeak unto him; yea I ſhould be afraid to pray unto him, every prayer (were I wicked) would be a praying down judgment upon my ſelf: But ſeeing I can boldly affirm, my conſcience alſo bearing me witneſs, that though I ſin, yet I love not to ſin, that though I am weak, yet I am not wicked, as ye have charged me; my heart being thus clear before God, I cannot fear to open my mouth and report my cauſe before God.*

Non ſic impius ego apud me. Pagn. *Non ſum talis qualem me putatis.* Vatabl. Merc.

Hence obſerve (which hath been offered from other paſſages in this book, and therefore I ſhall only obſerve it,) That

A godly man ſtandeth to, and knoweth his own integriey in the midſt of all the clamours and ſlanders, the miſapprehenſions or aſperſions of friends or enemies.

Whoſoever loads and charges him with ſtudied or approved hypocriſie, he will (and he ought to) unload and diſcharge himſelf (at leaſt) with *Jobs* plain denial; you ſuſpect me thus, but I am ſure, *it is not ſo with me.*

Thirdly, The words may bear this meaning, I have ſought and earneſtly intreated the Lord to abate my afflictions, and to remove his terrours, *But it is not ſo with me*; Alas, I do not find that the Lord hath done any of theſe things for me. His rod is ſtill upon my back, and his terrours ſtand as thick about my ſoul as ever: was ever poor man in ſuch a plight as I? 'Tis not (alas) with me, as I have prayed, or as I would have it. The rod ſmarts, and terrours amaze me ſtill. Hence note,

That a godly man may pray in affliction, and not preſently be relieved in or from his affliction.

Many a ſoul can ſay, It is ſo with me, as I have prayed, I have the wiſhes and deſires of my ſoul: yet many (and I believe many more then can) cannot ſay ſo. The Lord lets precious prayers lie unanſwered to our ſenſe. We may pray long before we find it ſo with us, as we have prayed, and yet thoſe prayers are not loſt,

but laid up; not buried, but sown. And it becomes us to have patience, till the harvest, though it be a late one.

Lastly, There is an opinion which gives this verse connexion with the first of the next Chapter. As if *Job* had thus resolved, upon the Lords not answering his petition, *Had the Lord condescended to take away his rod, and remove his terrour, as I requested, then I had somewhat to say, and I would have spoken it out unto him; but because it is not so, or because I am not answered, therefore I with my self* (the word [*Speak*] is not in the text: but such supplies of a word are frequent, not only in the Hebrew, but also in other languages) *Seeing I have not liberty to speak to the Lord, I will pour my complaints into mine own bosom, and commune with my own heart.* He pursues this tacite resolution in the tenth Chapter, which begins thus, *My soul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon my self.*

Quia non ita est (sc. quia è me terrorem suum non eximit) ego mecum. sc. Loquar mecum, ipso querar & omnem acerbitatem animi effundam apud me, ut facit in sequenti capite.

JOB

JOB, Chap. 10. Verſ. 1.

My ſoul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon my ſelf, I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.

JOB having in the former Chapter juſtified God in afflicting him, and maintained his own integrity, notwithſtanding thoſe afflictions, now returneth to that work, about which he had been too buſie before; yet that, wherein it ſeems he only found (as the caſe ſtood with him) ſome little eaſe and refreſhing, *The breathing out of his afflicted ſpirit in ſad complainings.* He reſumes his former lamentation, and renews afreſh what he had been more then large enough in, at the third, ſixth and ſeventh Chapters of this book. Here, as there, he ſhews how ill it was with him, and what cauſe he had to be in heavineſs, under the preſſure of ſo many evils.

Afflicti ſæpe ſe exonerari putant, ſi laxiùs habenâ de ſuo dolore queantur, & ſuas enumerent calamitates uberrima oratione. Merc.

And here, more then there, he remonſtrates that he conceived himſelf more hardly dealt with, then ſtood not only with the goodneſs of God in his nature, but with that goodneſs which he had formerly acted both towards others and himſelf: This encouraged him about the cloſe of the Chapter (verſ. 20. and 22.) to petition again, that he might have a little refreſhing before he lay down in his grave: and that God would (after theſe ſtorms) return him ſome of thoſe fair dayes he had enjoyed, before he returned to the earth, and ſhould be ſeen no more.

Argumentis utitur à natura Dei & anteacceptis ipſum beneficiis, quibus mala hæc quæ immiſit Deus magnopere repugnare videantur. Merl.

His complaint is very rhetorical and high, yet with an allay or mixture of modeſty. Indeed his ſpirit brake out, and paſſion got head, at the 18. and 19. verſes, where he expoſtulates with God, in the language of the third Chapter, *Wherefore haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb*, &c? But abating that exceſs of his tongue and ſpirit, his *complaints* are knit up with ſolid arguments, and his *Queries* put the point reſolutely, yet humbly, home to God himſelf: that he would be pleaſed to ſhew the reaſon of his preſent dealings, and why he varied ſo much from what he had done in former times.

Vehemens quidem partibus omnibus & gravis eſt querimonia, ſed modeſta, ſi unum illud optatum excepe-rit, ver. 18, 19. Merl.

The first verse gives us a general ground of this and of all his sorrowful complaints, The weariſomneſs of his life,

My ſoul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon my ſelf.

The argument may be formed thus;

He hath reaſon to complain of his afflictions, whoſe afflictions are ſo heavy upon him, and ſo bitter, that he hath reaſon to be weary of his very life.

But thus my caſe ſtands, my afflictions are ſo bitter to, and heavy upon me, that I am weary of my life.

Therefore I have reaſon to complain.

The aſſumption of this ſyllogiſme is contained in the firſt words of the verſe, *My ſoul is weary of my life.* And the concluſion in the latter; *Therefore I will leave my complaint upon my ſelf, I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.*

My ſoul is weary of my life.

Life and ſoul are often in Scripture put promiſcuouſly for the ſame, but here they differ. The ſoul may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, Strictly, as it is oppoſed to the body.

Secondly, In a more large ſenſe (by a *Synechdoche* of the part for the whole) for the whole man conſiſting of body and ſoul: If ſo here, then the meaning of *Job* in ſaying [*My ſoul is weary of my life*] is no more but this, *I* (*Job*) *am weary of my life*, that is, of the marriage or union of my ſoul and body, O that this band (which I (though moſt are grieved at the weakneſs of theirs) find too ſtrong) were broken, or a bill of divorce granted for their ſeparation. Life is the band or tie by which ſoul and body ſubſiſt together. And when that band is broken or cut aſunder by the ſtroke of death, the body goes to the grave, and the ſoul or ſpirit returns to God who gave it.

Again, When *Job* ſaith, *My ſoul is weary of my life.* Life may be taken either for the act of life, and ſo the ſenſe is, *I am weary of living*; or it may be taken for the manner of life, and ſo the ſenſe is, *I am weary of that courſe or ſtate of life wherein I am.* Life is often put (not ſtrictly for the act of living, but) for the ſtate or condition in which a man lives, or with which life is cloathed; The circumſtances and concomitants of life are called life. Thus in our common ſpeech, when a man is in miſery, another ſaith, *I would not have his life*, or *what a life hath he?* The Apoſtles chara-

cter

ter of all natural men, is, that they are *alienated from the life of God* (Ephes. 4. 18) that is, they cannot endure to live such a life as God lives, or as he commands them to live, they cannot endure to be holy, as he is holy, or holy, as he calls them to be holy, in all manner of conversation. Thus *Job* was alienated from his own life, *I* (saith he) *am weary of my life*; that is, of a life thus imbittered, thus afflicted.

My soul is weary.

קוט *Debilitatus, languefactus per metaphoram tædio affectus, offensus fuit.*

The word which we translate [*weary*] varies the understanding of this sentence. It signifies properly to be *weakned*, as also to be *melted* or *molten with heat*; because a man that is extremely heated or melted by heat, is weakned, his spirits and strength being drawn forth and dissipated. But it is most commonly applied to that wearinesse which arises from the displeasednesse or irksomnesse of our minds. All burdens upon the body are light, compared with those which reach the soul. Three things weary and load the soul.

First, The filth and guilt of our own sins. *I will sprinkle you* (saith the Lord, *Ezek.* 36. 31.) *with clean water*, &c. What's the effect of this? It follows, *Then shall you remember your own evil wayes, and loath, or be weary of your selves* (it is this word) *because of all your abominations.* As if the Lord had said, before I change your hearts, ye sin, and are not wearied of your sins, nay, ye make a sport of, and dally with them: But when I shall work that great change upon your hearts, your opinion and apprehensions of sin will change too: nothing will be so bitter or burdensome, so unpleasant or wearisom to your souls as sin. *Fools make a mock of sin; they who are truly wise, mourn and groan under the sense and weight of it.*

Secondly, The unsutablenes and perverseness of other mens manners or dispositions weary the soul, *The righteous soul of Lot was vexed from day to day in seeing and hearing the unrighteous deeds of the debauched Sodomites* (2 Pet. 2. 8.) The soul of God is said to be wearied by such courses of the sons of men (Psal. 95. 10.) *Fourty years long was I grieved, or wearied, with that generation.* The Lord (as we may speak with reverence) was even weary of his life, he had such a troublesom people to deal with; they grieved him at the heart (as the old world did, *Gen.* 6. 6.) and were a heavy burden to his spirit. That's the Apostles language, in his description of that

ἐτεροφόρησεν forte pro ἐτεροφόρησεν.

that peoples frowardness, and of Gods patience towards them (*Act.* 13.18.) *He suffered their manners fourty years in the wilderness*; which some render, He bare them as a burthen; the continual murmurings and unbelief of that people were to the Lord (who is yet above all passion) as a heavy weight is to a man, or as the peevishness and unquietness of a sucking child is to the nurse, our translatours conceive the Greek word should rather be. Thus also he reproves the same people by the Prophet (*Isa.*43.24. *Thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.* And Christ (though by another word) speaks the same thing of his own Disciples (*Mark* 9. 19. when the man possest with an unclean spirit being brought to them; they could not cast him out) *How long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you?* I am wearied with your unbelief, *O ye of little faith.* The Disciples were still so slow of heart, and came so short of a Gospel-spirit, that Christ professeth, He was burthened even with them, *How long shall I suffer you? The ill manners of all, are a weariness to the good, but theirs most who are neareſt to them.* Which is also the reason, why a godly man is wearied most of all with the corruption of his own heart, for that is nearest to him of all.

ἀνέχομαι Tolero, ἀνέχεσθαι autem dicuntur translatitiè qui volentes onus subeunt, & sub eo perdurant.

Now, as our own sins, and the ill manners of others weary the soul: so

Thirdly, The pains and troubles which are upon the body often cause such grief of mind, as is an extream weariness to the soul: That's the meaning of this text [*My soul is weary of my life*] That is, my life is filled with such outward troubles, as fill my inward man with trouble, and weary my very soul.

Verbum קוץ ex sententia R. David, & R. Mardoc. significat excidere aut succidere. Excisa est anima mea in me. Pag. Vatabl. &c. Actum est de vita mea, en morior, vel perinde ac si mortuus plane sum.

Secondly, The word is translated by divers of the learned Rabbies, *To cut, yea to cut off*, as with a sword, or any other edged instrument: These render *Jobs* mind thus, *My soul is cut off in me*; or, *My soul is cut off from my life*; As if he had said, My dayes are at an end, I am ready to die, the thread of my life is cut, I am but a dead man. While life continues, soul and body are as it were one piece, but death divides them; or the recourse of night and day, runs the thread of time thorow our lives, till our web (longer or shorter) be finished, and then the thread is cut. To which similitude *Hezekiah* alludes in his mourning death-bed song, as he supposed (Isa.38.10,12.) *I said in the cutting off of my dayes*, &c. *Mine age is removed from me, as a shepherds tent, I have cut off like a Weaver my life, he will cut me off with pining sickness,*

or

or from the thrum, which being woond about the beam, the Weaver having finished his work, cuts the web off from it. The same word in the Hebrew signifies pining sickness, and a thrum, because of the thinness and weakness of it. My life (saith *Hezekiah*) is spent, I am at the very last cast, the yern of time is all wrought off, therefore my life is ready to be cut off. I am a borderer upon death, and to be numbred among the dead, rather then among the living. Such a sense this reading gives the text of *Job*, *My soul is cut off from my life.*

Denotat displicentiam qua homo interius tabescit præ dolorûm sensu. Propriè significat βδελυγμα, i.e. rem putidam et quæ nauseam parit aversari.

Thirdly, The word signifies a reluctance or displacency of spirit, arising from the sight and sense of that which is very loathsom, filthy, and of an ill savour. It answers the Greek word rendered *Abomination* (Matth. 24. 15.) *The abomination of desolation*; he means the *Romans*, who being Idolaters, their worship was abominable, and who being Lords of the world, their power was formidable, and laid all countries waste and desolate, which opposed them, or which they had a mind to oppose. And so when *Job* saith, *My soul is weary of my life*; his meaning is represented thus, My soul refuses to inhabit, or to act so filthy a body as mine; My soul loaths to dwell, or stay any longer in this nasty lodging: As *David* (Psal. 120. 5.) speaks of his weariness in dwelling amongst wicked men, because of their mortal filthiness, or the pollution of their minds and wayes. *Wo is me that I sojourn in Meshec; that I dwell in the tents of Kedar*; So *Job* seems to speak, in reference to the natural pollution and filthiness of his own body. *Wo is me that I sojourn in such a diseased body, and dwell (which yet will not die) in such a dying carcase. The noble tenant, my soul, is weary of staying in such a stinking and filthy habitation, and I perceive (for I have moved him hither to in vain) the great land-lord will neither repair it, nor as yet let it fall.* As then, a man, who lives in an ill or incommodious house, saith, *I am weary of dwelling in it*; or as a man that hath a filthy garment, saith, I am weary of wearing it: So saith *Job* here, My soul is weary of my life, were I well rid of it, I should be well.

R. Moyses cum aliis Hebræis doctoribus existimat propriam vocis significationem esse, litigare aut contendere. Litigavit anima mea in vita mea.

Fourthly, Many of the Jewish Doctors tell us that the most strict and proper signification of this word, is *To contend or strive, to chide or wrangle* (we may give it in that homely language.) As if the meaning of *Job* were, *My soul doth even contend, chide and wrangle with my life, my soul contests and disputes the matter with my life, why it will not end, that I may get out from this body of mine, and*

Litigavi. Pag. *and go beyond the reach of these afflictions.* The 95. Psalm, vers. 10. is so translated, *Fourty years long did I contend, chide or contest angerly with that generation:* The Lord did often chide with the people of *Israel*, and they used to chide with *Moses*; whence one place was called *Meribah*, yea, through their unbelief they did chide with God himself, and (there is no reason dust and ashes should have the last word) God also gave them their chidings, and told them plainly their *own*, more then once. Thus the soul of *Job* chid his life; what's the reason that I am held in this condition, why wil tnot thou be gone, that I may be at rest? Carnal men chide with their lives for hastening so fast away, because they know of no rest, or have hope of none hereafter. A godly man may be brought to chide with his life for making no more haste away, because he finds none, or so little rest here. *Elihu* (Ch. 33. 19.) describing in the method which God uses to humble proud man, adds, *He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones wi h strong pains*; He is chastened; the word signifies also reproving, or convincing by arguments, and that in a quick and passionate, as well as in a rational and solid way. Now, while afflictions chidingly smite us, we are apt to chide them, and give them at least a word for a blow. *Job* did not only chide with his afflictions, but with his life, because it would not depart and be gone, being so unkindly used and imbittered by afflictions. His soul did even chide his life out a doors.

Crudelis effecta est anima mea. Chald. *Homo qui sibi ipsi mortem precatur adversum se sævire videtur.*

The Chaldee Paraphrast gives the meaning yet higher, *My soul is grown cruel against my life*; As if he had said, I am so exceedingly afflicted and pained, that my soul begins to rage against my life, I can hardly hold my own hands off from my life, and I would not have God hold his. Let not my life be spared, how glad should I be to see it poured out, *Anguish is come upon me* (as the *Amalekite* reports of *Saul*, 2 Sam. 1. 9.) *because my life is whole in me. O that God would stand upon me and slay me*; my soul is hardned against my life (like the Ostrich against her young ones, *Chap.* 39. 16.) as if it were not mine. Let me die, and that shall be a favour, smite me, and that will be to me as a precious ointment, though it break my head, and let out my troubled spirits. Then we are cruel to our lives, when we care not what's done to us, or how we are used so we may be rid of our lives.

But (to pass this) our translation is clear and significant,

My

My soul is weary of my life.] I am so weary of the pains wherein I live, that I had rather my life should end, then my pains should continue.

Job complained in the third Chapter, he complained at the sixth and seventh Chapters, he erred twice, yea thrice upon this point before, yet now we hear him complaining, as if he had not complained at all. This was *Jobs* infirmity: though somewhat hath, and more may be said to take off those aspersions which his friends cast upon him for complaining, yet no doubt it was his sin to complain, especially to break out so often, and in such bitter complainings. Hence observe,

A godly man may (possibly) fall often into the same sin.

Where grace taketh hold of the heart, it breaks the custom and spoils the trade of sin; yet a godly man may sin over the same sin, and renew the same transgression. The trade of sin is spoiled, when the soul leaves devising, plotting, contriving sin, which acts denominate a worker of iniquity. The custom of sin is broken, when though the same sin be committed again, yet the soul puts in its plea and complaint against it. 'Tis here as in civil things, if we make our challenge or demand, the custom is gone, though the acts be renewed by the power and prevaleney of the opposite party; yet, when I say a godly man may fall into sin often, I mean not of gross and scandalous sins; God doth not let his people fall often into the mire. *Noah* was not often drunk, nor did *David* commit adultery often, or more then once. The grace of God which bringeth salvation, teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. And if a godly man fall often into any the least sin, yet he lies not in sin, because he renews repentance, as often as he sins, and rises as often as he falls: he resolves (through the strength of Christ) never to sin, when through his own weakness, and the violence of temptation, he is soon after overtaken or surpriz'd with sin. *David* professeth (Psal. 119. 30.) *I have chosen the way of truth*; His election was *truth*; truth of heart, which is opposed to hypocrisie; truth of judgment, which is opposed to errour; and truth of speech, which is opposed to lying; yet he slipt with his tongue, more then once, and told an untruth, more then one. He cannot be acquitted from this failing, when he answered *Abimilech* the Priest, *The King hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, Let not any man know any thing*

of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee; and I have appointed my servants to such a place (1 Sam. 21. 2.) He again faulters with his tongue, and speaks either falsly or doubtfully, when the King of the Philistines asked him, *Whether have ye made a rode to day? And David said, against the South of Judah*, &c. (1 Sam. 27. 10.) *when as his invasion was against the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites* (vers. 8.) He that overcame the Bear, the Lion, and *Goliah* the Giant, is overcome by fear, and the mother of it, unbelief. *Davids* example should be no encouragement, shall be no excuse to those who willingly fall often into the same sin. A good man is not priviledg'd from doing it, but no man is priviledg'd to do it. Such examples must not teach us to sin, but they teach us how unable we (alone) are to keep our selves from sin: they teach us also, what need we have to depend upon, and look up to Christ, that we may be kept from sin: if he leave us but a little unto our selves, the flesh will discover much of it self, and we shall quickly shew what our natures are, though we are renewed by grace. *We must trust to the supplies, not to the receipts of grace.*

Secondly, When *Job* saith [*My soul is weary of my life.*] We learn; That

Soul and life in man are two distinct things.

For howsoever (as was toucht in explication) the soul is often put for the whole man, and so the sense of, *my soul is weary*, may be but this, I am weary of my life: yet the holy Ghost would never denominate all man by that, which is not, not a part of man. That's a brutish opinion which makes the soul nothing, or nothing else but life, and this life no more in entity then the life of a beast, which vanisheth, when it dieth. That these opinionists tell us, they believe the body shall rise again by the power of God, cannot satisfie for this fall, which their opinion gives the soul: neither doth the immortality of the soul at all contradict (which was threatned for, and is the wages of sin) the death of the whole man. For death consists not (if we may say a privation doth consist) in the annihilation, but in the separation of those parts of man, soul and body, which by life are united and kept close together.

Thirdly, When *Job* saith, *My soul is weary of my life*, we learn,

That

That the life of man may grow to be a burthen to him.

In the third Chapter *Job* wished for death, his wish was examined there, about the lawfulness of it, I shall now only examine (a touch about which was given lately) whence this weariness of life causing wishes to be rid of life doth arise. There is a weariness of life incident only, and proper to wicked men. And there is a weariness of life, which may grow upon the best of men. Take a brief account of the usual grounds of both.

First, Carnal men are often sick with discontent, and die of a humour: If the Lord will not give them their lusts, they bid him take their lives. Necessaries and competencies will not satisfie them, they must have superfluities; they languish, if they have not Quails to their Manna, as *Israel* once desired and had. Was it any thing but this, which made *Ahab* go home sullen and sad? Sullen sadness is a degree of this weariness. *Ahab* had a Kingdom, and yet he could not live without a Vineyard. *He that takes away another mans life to obtain what he desires, thinks his own life scarce desirable, unless he may obtain it.* There was a spice of this distemper in *Jonah*, though a good man, and a Prophet (*Jonah* 4.8.) because the Lord did but kill his Gourd, kill me too, saith *Jonah*, *He wished himself to die, and said* (his Gourd being dead) *It is better for me to die then to live.* It is an excess of desire, when we desire any outward thing (much more when we desire things unnecessary, things not to supply our wants, but to serve our lusts) As *Rachel* did children (who are the best and noblest of outward things) *Give me them, or else I die* (Gen. 30.1.)

Secondly, Some wicked men are wearied of their lives by the horrour of their consciences. A hell within, makes the world without a hell too. They who have a sight of eternal death (as the wages of sin) without the sight of a remedy may soon be weary of a temporal life. As much peace of conscience and soul joy in believing, makes some of the Saints wish themselves out of the body; so also doth trouble of conscience, and grief of soul make many of the wicked. A man who is not at all weary of committing sin, may be weary of his life, because he hath committed it. And he, who was never troubled that his wickedness is as an offence against God, may feel his wickedness extremely offensive against himself. To such a soul the evil of sin is so great an evil of punishment, that he is ready to cry out with

Cain, My puniſhment is greater then I can bear. Yea, what his guilty conſcience feared, comes to be the deſire of many under the ſame guilt, *That every one that findeth them would ſlay them*: And ſome are ſo weary of their lives at the ſight of ſin, that they make away their lives themſelves, hoping to get out of the ſight of ſin. There are ſins which cry to God for vengeance, and ſome cry to the ſinner himſelf for vengeance. This cry was ſo loud and forcible in the ears of *Judas*, that it cauſed him to go away and hang himſelf. And what made *Ahithophel* weary of his life, but his wickedneſs? The rejecting of his counſel was not ſo much the reaſon of it, as the ſinfulneſs of his counſel: A good man may be troubled at others, when his good counſel is not accepted, but he grows not unacceptable to himſelf; nay, he is well-pleaſed that he hath given honeſt counſel, though none will take it, though all are diſpleaſed at it. But they who aim not at the pleaſing of God in what they do, think themſelves undone (and die they will) if they pleaſe not men.

Thirdly, Inordinate cares for the things of this life, make others weary of their lives. He that cannot caſt his care upon God, may ſoon be caſt down himſelf. Chriſt (*Luk.*21.34.) cautions his Diſciples, *Take heed leſt your hearts be over-charged with the cares of this life.* That which Chriſt would prevent in the Saints, falls often upon carnal men, their hearts are over-charged with cares: cares are compared to a burden, and they are compared to thorns, they do not only preſs, but vex and wound: Their weight preſſes ſome to death, their ſharpneſs wounds others to death: And not a few would go out of the world, becauſe they cannot get ſo much of it, as they would.

Theſe things (among others) make wicked men *weary of their lives.* There are other things which make godly men weary of their lives; ſuch are theſe,

Firſt, The violence of Satans, and the worlds temptations. The ſoul would gladly be rid of the body, that it might be beyond the reach and aſſaults of the devil, and his aſſiſtants. There's a ſerpent every where, but in the heavenly paradiſe. *Only they complain not of temptation, who are willing ſlaves to the tempter.* The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.*10:13.) aſſures the *Corinthians*, *There hath no temptation taken you, but ſuch as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that ye*

may

may be able to bear it; as if he had said, Temptations are sore burdens, and although yours hitherto have been but ordinary temptations, such as usually befall the Saints, though yours be moderate afflictions, and of a common stature, such as in the eye of reason any man may deal with by a common assistance of grace; yet there are temptations, which (if God, the faithful God should not come in with greater assistances then usual) you are not able to bear it. *They who wrestle with more then flesh and bloud, alwayes need more then the strength of flesh and bloud to help them in their wrestlings.* And because they are often assaulted with greater strength, therefore they are assisted with greater strength. For if God do either withdraw his help from the Saints, or leave them to wrestle with Satan alone, and to fight single with his Armies, or if he do not proportion the aid he sends to the temptation he permits, they are sadly over-charged, though they can never be totally overcome; and 'tis possible to grow weary of the battel, though we are assured of the victory. *It is the honour of the Saints to conquer, when they are tempted; but it is their happiness to be above or without temptation.* How many poor souls put up bills of complaint, and beg prayers against temptations. *Paul pray'd thrice*, that is, often and much, *when the messenger of Satan buffetted him*: whether his were an inward or an outward temptation is doubted, but without doubt that temptation made his life burdensom to him, till he received that answer from God, *My grace is sufficient for thee.*

Secondly, The Saints are wearied with the weight of their sinful hearts. Inward corruption burdens more then outward temptation: and were it not for corruption within, temptation without could not be very burdensome: The devil tempted Christ, but because he found *nothing at all in him*, complying with, or sutable to his temptations; therefore Christ threw them off with ease. That enemy without could do us no hurt (he might put us to some trouble) if he found no correspondence within. The traitour in our own bowels, opens our ports, and lets in the adversary. His sparks could never enflame us, if he found no tinder in us. The baseness and unbelief, the lusts and vanities of our minds, are apt to take fire at every injection. *A gracious soul cannot live here without sin, and yet can easier die then sin.* *Paul* (Rom. 7. 24.) cries out, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death, or from this body of death?*

death! That is, *from my body which is subject to death by reason of these remains of carnal corruption, or from my carnal corruptions, which are the remains of my spiritual death, and are worse to me then any death.* All the afflictions of his life, and the pains of his body, were but a play, and a kind of sport, compared with the trouble which this body of death put him to. He rejoyced in tribulation, but he could not but mourn under corruption. Many poor souls are so vexed with these mystical *Canaanites*, that their spiritual *Canaan* (the state of grace) is to them like *Egypt*, the land of their captivity. And when they are commanded to rejoyce: they answer, if we could not sin, we could rejoyce, *How shall we sing the Lords song in a strange land?* O that we might go home.

Thirdly, The Saints grow weary of their lives through the wickedness of other mens lives; not only do their own corruptions burthen them, but (which shews the holiness of their hearts more) the corruptions of others. The sinfulness and pollutions of the times and places wherein they live, especially of persons they are related to, makes their lives grievous, and imbitters all their comforts. *Rebekah*, that good woman, tells her husband *Isaac* (Gen. 27 46.) *I am weary of my life, because of the daughters of Heth, for if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?* The sweetness of my life is gone, if this son miscarry, as his brother hath done before him. The Prophet *Jeremy* cries out, O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of waifairing men, that I might leave my people, and go from them; What made him so weary of living among them? (and that was but a step on this side being weary of his life.) The next words shew us, *They be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men* (Jer. 9. 2.) Better be in a waste wilderness among wild beasts, then in a populous City, among beastly men. 'Tis a part of our compleat happiness in heaven, that we shall have no ill neighbours there. They who are evil can take pleasure in those who do evil. *But the more holiness any one hath, the more is he burthened with the unholiness of others.* And that's the reason why God himself is expresst to be so exceedingly burdened with the sins of men, to be wearied and broken with them, to be laden with them, as a Cart with sheaves, *He is infinitely holy. Grieve not the holy Spirit of God* (Ephes. 4. 30.) The Spirit is so holy, that sin (which is unholiness)

holiness) grieves him presently. And in proportion, look how much any man is more holy then others, by so much is he more afflicted with the impurity of others. As the holy Spirit of God, who is all holy: so the spirits of holy men (who yet have a mixture of sin) cannot but be afflicted with the sins of men.

Fourthly, Some of the Saints would part with this life, because they have got such assurance and evidence of a better life. When much of eternal life appears to a godly man, he is weary of a temporal life. Natural things are but burdensome trifles to those who are stored with spiritual. Christ saith (*Luke* 5. 39.) *No man having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new, for he saith the old is better:* He that tastes what is better then he enjoyes, is unsatisfied with all he enjoyes. We can hardly be perswaded what we have is good, when we see better of the same kind. How much more hardly is this perswasion wrought in us, that earthly things (which differ in kind from heavenly) are any great good, when heavenly things are open before us. When the Disciples (at the transfiguration) had but a glimpse of glory, They say, *It is good to be here, Let us build three tabernacles.* They do not speak comparatively, as if now they had met with somewhat better then ever they had before; but positively, as if they had never met with any good before. When the Spirit carries the Saints into his wine-cellar, and gives them a draught of everlasting consolations, the wine of worldly comforts will not down; they begin to distelish the dainties and delicacies of the creature. A true sight of heaven makes the earth scarce worth the looking after, or the living in. Such live, because God will have them live to do him service, not because they desire to live to serve their own ends. *Paul* was in a great straight betwixt two (*Phil.* 1. 23.) whether he should depart or abide in the flesh: but the straight was not in reference to himself, he was assured, dying would be to him, but a travelling to Christ, and therefore death was to him an easie election. His straight was only this, whether he should not abide still in the flesh, to supply the needs of the Church, and forbear glory a while, that he might prepare others for glory. The same Apostle (2 *Cor.* 5.) saith in the first verse, *We know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house made without hands, eternal in the heavens.* When their faith was thus upon the wing, soaring up to the assurance of *an house*

made

made without hands, they grew weary of their smoaky cottages presently; they could not endure to live in those poor lodges, corruptible bodies, having a view of such glorious pallaces; therefore he adds, *In this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven.* The word signifies groaning, as a man that hath a weighty burden lying upon him, which makes him fetch his wind even from his bowels. The body is the burden, rather then the house or the clothing of the soul, when once the soul knows it shall be clothed with an house, which is from heaven. As (I said before) much of hell in this life makes wicked men weary of this life, so also doth much of heaven. The Roman Oratour tells us, that a young man, who lived in great prosperity, having read *Plato* about the immortality of the soul, was so affected, that he threw himself violently from a high wall into the sea, that he might have a proof of that immortality, by his experience of it. The Gospel forbids such haste, and knows no such wayes to happiness. As Christ (not we) hath purchased that estate; so Christ must lead us (we must not thrust our selves, into the possession of it: but yet the earnests, the foretastes and first-fruits of heaven, which the Saints find in this life, (though they be such as eat the marrow and fatness, such as may have the very cream and spirits of the creature to live upon) make them groan often and earnestly for the next life. *This is good, but heaven is better.*

στενάζομεν.

Cic in Tuscul. Quest. de Cleambroto.

Lastly, Which is the case of this text, the Saints may grow weary of their lives from the outward afflictions and troubles of this life. Sickness and pains upon the body, poverty and want in the estate, reproaches and unkindness put upon our persons, with a thousand evils to which this life is subject every day, cause many to wish and long for an end of their dayes. And though they are ready to submit to the will of God, if he have appointed them to a longer conflict with these evils, yet they cannot but shew their willingness, yea their gladness to part with their lives, that they may part with such troubles accompanying their lives.

And as the afflictions of the body natural, so of the body politick, may make them weary of their lives. How many in *Germany* and *Ireland* have been so wearied with hearing the voice of the oppressour, that they have wished themselves in their graves, only to get out of their hearing. And with us, since these

these troubles began, have not many been tired with living; Have they not cried after death, & wooed the grave, as being weary of the world? The Prophet (*Isa.* 32.2:) speaks of a weary land. *A man* (meaning Christ) *shall be as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.* The land it self (being insensible) could not be weary; but he calls it *a weary land*, because the Inhabitants living in the land, were wearied with the troubles and continual vexations which they found there. In these cases the soul of a believer stands (like *Abraham* when the Angels passed by) at the tent door of his body, ready to come forth, looking when God will but call, yea, he cries out, that he may be called (in the language of *Job*) *My soul is weary of my life.*

I will leave my complaint upon my self, I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

I will leave, &c.] That is, I will carry my complaint no further, it shall trouble none but my self.

The original signifies also to strengthen or fortifie (*Nehem.* 3.8.) *They fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall*; we put in the Margin, *They left Jerusalem to the broad wall*: So the sense of *Job* may be this, My pains do not abate, but increase, why then should *I* remit or abate my complaint, *I* will strengthen my complaint as long as my sorrows are strengthened.

My complaint.

That word hath been explained before, it signifies an inward, as well as an outward complaint, and that most properly. Some translate it so here, *I will groan in silence with my self.* But the text requires, rather that we interpret it of an external complaint, formed up into words. The Septuagint are express, and so is *Austin*, *I will leave my words upon my self*: both interpreting it of a vocal declaration of his mind and meaning.

Permittam mihi mussitationem. Tygur. *Silentio egemet ingemuscam et Philosophabor.* Polychron. *Deponam à me querimoniam meam.* Jun.

The greatest difficulty lies in those words [*upon my self*] One renders, I *will leave my complaint off, or lay it aside from my self.* As if *Job* meant to give over this work of complaining, and to compose his heart to quietness, how unquiet soever his estate continued. But his following practice seems to confute this interpretation, and to deny any such intention.

Others give this sense, I will speak at my own peril, and if any danger or inconvenience come of it, I will bear it my self, I will run that venture. *Job* uses such language (*chap.* 13. 13.) *Hold your peace, let me alone that I may speak, and let come on me what will.* We may gloss it with that heroical resolution of Queen *Esther* (Esth. 4. 16.) *So will I go in unto the King, which is not according to the Law, and if I perish, I perish.* The Hebrew preposition hath various acceptions.

Præpositio עַל *frequenter per super, nonnunquam per cum & aliquando per adversus redditur. Nihil contra Deum, in me tantum desæviam.* Pined.

First (as we) It is translated *Upon.* Secondly, *With.* Thirdly, *Against.* Fourthly, *Concerning or about.*

We may take in any of, or all these translations. And from all, the meaning of *Job* seems to rise thus, *I intend not to speak a word against God, I will not charge the Almighty with injustice, or with rigour, to do which were highest wickedness; I purpose indeed to complain, but I will complain only upon, or with my self, concerning or against my self, I will not utter a word against the wisdom of God, or accuse his providence. I will not shoot an arrow against heaven, or send out a murmur against the most high.*

There are two wayes of leaving our complaints upon our selves,

First, When we let them lie wholly upon our selves, and will not go to God for strength or patience to bear them. Who can sufficiently mourn over them, who leave their complaints in this sense upon themselves? It is sinful and foolish to leave our complaints thus upon our selves: 'Tis a duty to leave them upon God, and to pour them into the bosom of *Christ*, who can, and who only can either ease us of them, or make them easie to us: who can, and who only can take off our burdens, or enable us to carry them. The burden of our ordinary cares will break our backs, if left upon our selves; how then shall we in our own strength stand under the burden of extreamest sorrows?

Secondly, We leave our complaint upon our selves, when we make no excuses or evasions, but plainly charge the fault upon our selves. Thus we ought to leave all our complaints upon our selves. It is sinful and foolish to charge any of them wholly upon the devil, or at all upon God. An honest heart takes them home, and saith, God is righteous, but I am a transgressour, what he hath done he may do, and he hath done justly in all that he hath done. This is the sense of *Jobs* resolution, *I will leave my complaint upon my self.*

Hence observe,

What-

Whatsoever a godly man suffereth, he will not charge God with it, but himself.

He is more careful of the honour of God, then of his own peace, and had rather die then the glory of God should suffer. *O Lord* (saith *Daniel*, chap. 9. 7.) *righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of face*; And (vers. 14.) *the Lord is righteous in all his works which he doth, for we obeyed not his voice.* When the Angel was smiting *Israel* with the plague of pestilence, *David* bespeaks the Lord in reference to the people, *Loe, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly*; *but these sheep, What have they done? Let thine hand I pray thee be against me*, &c. (2 Sam 24. 17.) I take the blame to my self, Lord, upon me let thy stroak be, even upon me, not upon *Israel*: So saith the soul, in reference unto God, upon me be the blame of all the troubles and afflictions which I feel, not upon God; What hath God done? All that he hath done is right, and just, and good. *It is an argument of a holy frame of heart, to be often judging our selves, and alwayes acquitting of God*: To be often complaining of our selves, and to be ever exalting God; to be alwayes thanking him for our comforts, and alwayes saying, we may thank our selves for our sorrows. Whatsoever the Lord saith or doth concerning us, we should not only say with *Hezekiah* (when a sad message was brought him, 2 *King.* 20. 19. *Good is the Word of the Lord*, but also, Good are the Works of the Lord. Many men are ready to lay their sins (much more their sorrows) upon God. So the Apostle represents them (*Rom.* 9. 19.) *Thou wilt say unto me, Why doth he then find fault?* Why doth God complain of us? we have more reason to complain of, and charge our faults on God. If he hardeneth whom he will, Why are we blamed for being hardened? *For who hath resisted his will?* Thus they question God, Who hath resisted thy will? whose lives are nothing else but a continued war against, and resistance of his will. They who strive most to comply with the will of God, complain often of themselves for resisting it. And though they know God hardeneth whom he will, yet they will not leave the hardening of any upon God, as his fault, but as his prerogative. They confess it to be as great an act of holiness in God, to harden some men in sin, as it is to soften others by his grace: Mercy appears chiefly in the one, justice appears chiefly in the other, but holiness equally in both.

I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

A bitter soul bringeth forth bitter words. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh. If there be abundance of joy in the heart, the mouth will speak joyfully; and if there be abundance of sorrow in the heart, the mouth speaks sorrowfully. As when there is abundance of filth in the heart, the mouth speaks filthiness. We may see the lines and image of mans mind drawn upon his words. One man speaks in the anger of his soul, and he speaks angerly. Another speaks in the pride of his soul, and he speaks proudly. A third speaks in the profaneness of his soul, and he speaks profanely. Again, one speaks in the courage of his soul, and he speaks couragiously. Another speaks in the patience of his soul, and he speaks patiently. A third speaks in the faith of his soul, and he speaks believingly. There is a nearness to this sense, in that of the sixtieth Psalm (*verse 6.*) *God hath spoken in his holiness*; and we are assured he cannot but speak holily, who is *all holy*. I (saith *Job*) *will speak in the bitterness of my soul*, and he spake bitterly; his soul was bitter, and so was his speech too.

Loquar quicquid mihi afflictio suggesserit.

What he means by the bitterness of his soul, hath been opened heretofore, in the third Chapter, and in the seventh Chapter verse 11. thither I refer the Reader.

In brief, I *will speak in the bitterness of my soul*, is either this, I will let out the sorrows of my heart at my tongue, and it shall appear by what I say, what I feel. Or

Further, I *will speak in the bitterness of my soul*, may be taken as an Apology for what he spake. As if he had said, *Do not charge my complaint upon my own account, If I speak bitterly, it is not* I *that speak, but the bitterness that is in me.* As *Paul*, when he did what he would not, pleads in the seventh of the *Romans*, *It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* It is not I *Paul* an Apostle, not I regenerate *Paul*, but the remains of unregenerate *Paul*, of *Paul* a Pharisee, which rebell against the Law of God. In the same manner saith *Job* here, and so say the Saints; Are we at any time impatient, and complain more then becometh us, know it is not we that speak, but the *bitterness of our hearts*. The thing which we would not, that speak we; and therefore it is not we that speak, but the sorrow that dwelleth in us.

Non tam mea futura sunt verba, quam meæ amaritudinis, hæc enim imperat et extorquet orationem.

So then, speaking in the bitterness of the soul, notes either the

excess or greatness of a complaint, or the cause and spring of a complaint. The complaints of *Job* came not from the ordinary temper of his spirit, but from the troubles of his estate, distempering his spirit; he desired rather to be praising and glorifying God for his receits, then complaining over his own wants. But his wants were such, as he could not refrain from complaining, *I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.*

But what speaks he?

As when he first spake these words (*Chap.* 7. 11.) he presently turned his speech to God, desiring him to deal more sweetly with him, and puts the question, *Am I a Sea or a Whale?* &c.

So here, after he hath set forth his resolvedness to complain, he presently turns his speech to God, imploring favour, *I will say unto God, do not condemn me* (vers. 2.) and he puts the question (ver. 3.) *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress?* As if he had said, *Lord, I cannot but complain of my condition, and I must take the boldness to complain to thee; but I will not complain of thee, as if thou wert mine enemy; nor will I contend with thee, as if thou were a party, my meaning and scope is only this, to supplicate thee as my Judge. I will say unto God, Do not condemn me,* &c.

JOB, Chap. 10. Vers. 2, 3.

I will say unto God, Do not condemn me, shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress? That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?

IN the former verse, *Job* resolved to complain, in this second he begins his complaint; *I will say unto God,* &c. He complains to God, not against God. He leaves his complaint upon himself, but he tendereth and presenteth it before the Lord, *I will say unto God.*

What he saith may be cast into a double request;

1. That God would not condemn him.
2. That he would instruct or convince him; as if he had said, *Lord,*

Lord, do not use thy absolute power to destroy me; Do not reject me, because thou wilt? Shew me the reason of thy proceedings, that I may either sit down contented with what is amiss in my state, or reform and amend what is amiss in my life.

Do not condemn me.

μὴ με κατηξιώσῃς εἰπεῖν ἄδικα. *Noli me dignum facere qui dicam injusta.* Sept. *Forte graviore aliqua tristitia obrutus, impium aliquem vocem emittam,* q. d. *Noli occasionem quærere mei ipsius.*

The Septuagint hath a very different rendering of this clause, *I will say unto God, Do not teach me to be wicked*, or to do wickedly; but is it not wickedness as black as hell, to suppose that God teaches any man to be wicked? The Lord hates wickedness, and can he teach it? The Lord punishes wickedness, therefore he cannot teach it.

The mind of the Greek translatours is not, that God doth formally teach any to be wicked, but that some learn wickedness, or are ensnared in sin by that which God doth unto them; As if *Job* had said, *Lord, do not encrease and heap afflictions upon me. Do not over-grieve and burden the spirit of thy poor creature, lest he should even be forced through impatience to speak unadvisedly, or do any thing unbecommingly: Lord, do not occasion me thorow the extremity of my afflictions to say or do that which I must repent and be ashamed of.* Which is also the sense of that petition in the Lords-prayer, *Lead us not into temptation. Great afflictions lay us open to great temptations.* And as calamity is an occasion for our graces and vertues to shew themselves, so also for our lusts and corruptions. Some never appear so holy; and others, (I mean of those who are really godly) never shew so much unholiness, as in affliction. Hence that request of *Agur* (Prov. 30. 9.) *Lord, feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be poor, and steal, and take the Name of my God in vain.* Such is the meaning of the Septuagint, when they say, *Lord, teach me not to be wicked.* God teaches man to be holy, both by his word, and by his works, yet some of his works may occasion the flesh to learn wickedness, and to act wickedly.

Verba sunt hominis se excusantis, & quasi præcastigantis diversorem suam orationem. Aquin.

Secondly, These words may be understood, as a Preface; or a rhetorical introduction to prepare the ears of the Lord to receive the *bill of complaint*, which *Job* was about to put up unto him; As if he had said, *Lord (possibly) through the tediousness of my pain, and the continuance of my sorrows, words may slip from me, of which I shall not be able to give a good account, or others make a fair*

fair conſtruction; yet, Lord, Do not condemn: Do not cenſure me: I ſpeak only to excuſe my ſelf, not to accuſe thy Majeſty. I ſpeak only in my own defence, let not what I ſpeak be an offence to thee. Lord, I have ſo great a weight of affliction upon me, that I cannot but hope thou wilt give my words ſome grains of allowance, if they ſhould want their due weight of wiſdom and of holineſs. As *Abraham*, when he was about to pray for *Sodom*, makes his apologies and preparatory ſpeeches unto God, *Let not my Lord be angry, and I will ſpeak, and I will ſpeak yet this once* (Gen. 18.) So here, *I will ſpeak*, &c. but I will firſt ſay unto God, be not angry, *Do not condemn me*, If (my infirmities prevailing over me) I ſpeak amiſs. Lord, be not critical with me, examine not every word ſtrictly. Strong paſſions make an unruly Oratour; and when the ſpeaker bears much, he may expect to be much born with by his hearers. That's a ſecond. But rather,

Thirdly, We may take the words as a plain deprecation, *Do not condemn me*; The Hebrew is litterally thus rendered, *Do not wicked me*, that is, *Do not count me, or caſt me for a wicked man.* But did the Lord account *Job* as a wicked man? Or had *Job* an opinion that the Lord did account him ſo? Surely *Job* had good (yet humble) thoughts of himſelf, though he endured ſo many evils, yea he was perſwaded that the Lord (who laid thoſe evils on him) had good thoughts of him too: and when he ſaith, *Do not condemn me*, doubtleſs he had hopes poſſibly he had aſſurances that the Lord had juſtified and acquitted him; why then reſolves he, *I will ſay unto God, Do not condemn me?*

רשע *Verbum condemnandi fere ſemper ad culpam pertinet. Noli me peragere reum aut ſontem pronunciare. Hîc ſupplicio videris me velut impium ſceleratumque palam declarare.* Pin

Firſt, We may expound him thus, Lord, Do not that againſt me, which may give the world occaſion to condemn me; or, Lay not thy hand ſo heavily upon me, leſt they that underſtand not the reaſon of thy dealings, ſhould be occaſioned to adjudge me wicked: Though *Job* had a witneſs above, and a record on high, though he knew his reputation was unblemiſhed before God in the midſt of all thoſe breaches upon his family, and botches upon his body, yet he knew men would condemn him as guilty of the moſt notorious evils of ſin, when they ſaw him languiſhing under ſuch unparallel'd evils of puniſhment. This moved him to pray, Lord, do not condemn me, by making me an object of the worlds condemnation. *Ne quæſo me ita afflige ut omnes qui hoc vident, judicent me propter peccata graviſſima talia pati.*

Again, The words (*Do not condemn me*) may have this meaning. Lord, * Do what thou wilt with me, only do not condemn ** Permitto rerum aliarum jacturam, ſed non poſſum non dolere vehementer læſam meæ ſanctitatis & innocentiæ exiſtimationem.* Pined.

demn me. His earnest deprecations of this may carry in it a willing submission to any thing besides this. And 'tis very usual with men to do so; we think we could bear any affliction but that, or better then that, which is upon us. Yet *Job* had great reason to chuse any affliction rather then this. He might well say, I can, (through thy grace enabling me) bear these or any other pains of my body, and losses in my estate, but I know not how to bear the loss of mine innocency, or the reproach of being thrown out of thy favour. The world, and these my friends will be confirmed in their misapprehensions of me, if thou dost not speedily deliver me, and confute their rash judgment by some eminent mercy.

Condemnation hath three things in it, which make it grievous.

First, The penalty of the sentence.

Secondly, The disfavour of the Judge.

Thirdly, The stain of his integrity who is condemned. To have but so much as a suspition or jealousie of the displeasure of God, afflicts the spirit of a godly man, more then all his other afflictions. Though *Job* had a sure interest in the favour of God, and was freed from the penalty of condemnation, by his union with Christ; yet sometimes clouds and darkness came over him, and the terrours of the Lord did fight against him, which caused those sad lamentations in the sixth Chapter: but here he is chiefly troubled at the stain of his integrity in the eye of the world, who beholding his afflictions, blotted him as a wicked man, and esteemed him forsaken of God, even utterly discarded, and cast out of his sight. Observe hence,

First, That, *Great afflictions carry a charge of wickedness upon the afflicted.*

Paul having escaped death in a wreck at sea, could not escape a hard censure at land, when a viper was seen upon his hand: *This man* (say those *Barbarians* of *Melita* among themselves) *is no doubt a murderer, whom though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live* (Act. 28. 4.) We find also that those exemplary judgments which befell the *Galileans*, whose bloud *Pilate* had mingled with their sacrifices (it seems he caused them to be slain, while they offered sacrifice) and those upon whom the Tower of *Siloe* fell, left them all under a charge of highest wickedness; else Christ had not taken it off, saying, *Suppose ye that those Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered*

suffered such things? or those eighteen upon whom the Tower of Siloe fell, think ye that they were sinners above all that dwelt in Jerusalem? As if he had said, I, who know your thoughts, know ye are ready to think so. It is a very ill, but it is a very common thing, to judge both of persons and of causes by success. Doth a man gain and thrive in the world; here's a man sure whom God loves, saith the world. Though a *Jeremy* can say, *Why doth the way of the wicked prosper?* He can see them to be wicked thorow all their prosperity; yet, how often are they accounted righteous, who prosper; and good, who enjoy good? But doth a man wither and go down the wind in the world? He's a man sure whom God hates, saith the world. Man is apt to think them the worst, who suffer worst, and that they have sinned most who have most sorrow. The Prophet (*Isa.* 53. 4, 5.) fore-tels that Christ himself, *While he bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows, should be esteemed stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.* Christ was esteemed a great sinner, when God gave him up to be smitten for sinners, therefore he adds, *but he was wounded for our transgressions*, &c.

Secondly, observe, *The displeasure of God is more grievous to the Saints, then all other pressures and sorrows whatsoever.*

Job saith not, Lord do not afflict me, do not chasten me, lay not thine hand upon me any more, but, *Lord, do not condemn me.* It is infinitely worse to be condemned, then to be chastened, yea then to be killed. Condemnation carries in it an argument of disfavour, and that makes it so burdensom. As the love of God is better to us, then all the good things of this life (*Psal.* 4. 6.) *Many will say, Who will shew us any good?* This is the great query of the world: but what saith *David*, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us; thou hast put gladness in my heart, more then in the time that their corn and their wine encreased.* And as the favour of God is better to us then the good things of this life, so then life, which is better then all earthly goods (*Psal.* 63. 3.) *Thy loving kindness is better then life*; Now, I say, as the love of God is better to us then the best things in the world, so the displeasure of God is worser to us then the worst things that are in the world, all the torments and racks, all the sicknesses and distempers, all the reproaches and contempts of men have not so much evil in them to us, as one frown from God. Hence, as when two sore diseases (suppose the gout and the stone) both

very painful, yet one much exceeding, at once afflict the body, the patient forgets the less: so it is, when inward and outward sorrows at once seize upon one man, when the arrows of God are fastned in his spirit, he forgets the arrow in his flesh. *The wounds of the spirit heal all the wounds of the flesh*; they make them, as if they were no wounds, or not worth the complaining of.

Thirdly, observe, *To be accounted wicked, is a sore affliction.*

It is an affliction to have an ill name, though we deserve it not, and to be accounted wicked, though we are not; it is, I grant, far better to be censured, then to be flattered. It is very ill when others count us, and worst of all when we account our selves better then we are, yet it is no small evil to be accounted worse then we are, especially to be accounted evil, when we are good. A wound in our honour, is not a wound to be sleighted. It was no small part of the sufferings of Christ, that he was numbred with the transgressours in his death, and called *Beelzebub*, a friend of Publicans and sinners, while he lived.

Fourthly, observe from this, *Do not condemn me.*

That condemnation is the adjudging of one to be wicked.

Condemnation supposeth a man guilty, and leaveth him under a penalty. As *Justification* is the adjudging and declaring of a person to be righteous, or the accepting of *him* for righteous in another, *who* is not righteous in himself, so condemnation is the adjudging, pronouncing and declaring of a man to be wicked, who in himself is wicked. That's *Jobs* first request, I will say unto God, *Do not condemn me.* As if he had said, *Seeing thou art the God and Father of all, who call upon thee in faith, and fear thy Name; therefore in faith and filial reverence, I beseech thee to acquit me of my sin: yea, because I know thou hast acquitted me, therefore deal not with me, as if I were condemned for sin. Make it appear that thou art my God, either by removing these strokes (which represent me to the world as thy enemy, rather then thy son) or by removing the dread and terrour of them, that they may appear as exercises of my grace, not as revenges upon, or punishments of my sin: that while my body is pained with thy rod, my soul may rejoyce in thy love, and that, while I am under this cross, I may triumph over it. Or if thou art resolved still to detain me at this rate of suffering, then I have another humble suit.*

Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

That's his second request.

Shew me] The word signifies to make a matter intelligible or plain to the understanding; *If I must still feel these pains, then make me to understand them also. Let not the whole weight of my sorrows lie upon my sense, manifest them to my reason; the more I know of them, the better I shall manage and endure them.*

הודיעני
Fac scire me.

Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.] The word which we translate to *contend*, signifies properly contention between party and party, not the sentence of the Judge. The parties to a sute, contend, but do not condemn. The Judge condemns the Delinquent party, but he doth not contend. His office is to hear the cause, and upon full evidence on both sides to pass his sentence. *Job* speaks in the stile of both, desiring the Lord not to condemn him as a Judge, and to shew him why he contended with him, as a party. Thus the Lord is said in *Hosea*, to have a *controversie with the inhabitants of Israel* (Hos. 4.1.) and it seems by another Prophet, that he had continued a long one with them, and therefore promised, *I will not contend for ever*, Isa. 57. 16.

ריב
Partium est non judicis partes litigant non condemnant, judex condemnat, non litigat. Drus.

Further, *Cause me to know*; or, *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me*, is, as if *Job* had said, *Lord, my troubles and sorrows are very well known, they run into every eye, they are apparent enough to the world; all see that thy hand is lifted up, and I feel it: but the reason of it I do not understand, much less do they, there is a curtain drawn between the world, and the reason why I am troubled; yea, there is a curtain drawn between me, and the reason of my troubles: Now therefore, Lord, draw back the curtain, or unvail my eyes; let me see clearly, and let the world see why I am thus afflicted; for though I know I am a sinner, and have many failings, yet I know nothing my self: I am not conscious of any wickedness, or close hypocrisie, much less of any prophaneness or apostacy, which should cause thee to pour out such full viols of thy indignation upon me*; Then, *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.*

Oportet omnibus notam fieri causam mearum ægritudinum, nequis ex re manifesta ad occultiorem aliam causam investigandam temere dilaberetur. Pined.

This [*Wherefore*] may have a three fold reference;

1. *Shew me*, whether it be for sin or no?
2. If it be for sin, Shew me for what sin it is?
3. If it be not for sin, Shew me for what else it is? What is the thing thou aimest at and intendest? What's the end thou pro-

propoſeſt to thy ſelf in theſe my unheard of afflictions?

But is it lawful to put ſuch queries, or to deſire ſuch reſolutions from the Lord? Ought not *Job* to have prayed for wiſdom how to bear his croſs, rather then have asked knowledge, why it was laid upon him?

Job deſired a reaſon: First, Not to ſatisfie his curioſity, but his conſcience; not that he would be prying into Gods ſecrets, or unlocking the cabinet of his counſel to ſee what was there; but that the ſecrets of his own heart might be opened, and a diſcovery made to him of what was hid there. He deſired a reaſon, not doubting the juſtice or goodneſs of God, but as ſuſpecting ſome evil in himſelf, as yet unſeen.

Or, ſecondly, He deſired a reaſon, not ſo much to ſatisfie himſelf, as that the world might be ſatisfied; that they who judged and condemned him, as an hypocrite, might have their raſh judgment confuted and anſwered by a determination from heaven. As if he had further ſaid, *Lord, if thou wouldeſt but ſhew me this thing, it would either ſtop the mouths of thoſe, who have been ſo forward to cenſure me; or ſtop my mouth from any further complainings to thee: I cannot reſcue my ſelf out of thy hand, nor dare I accuſe thy wiſdom, in laying thy hand upon me. But, Lord, deal not with me by the ſtrict rule of thy ſoveraignty, which is to act above all rules, and to do what thou wilt, becauſe thou wilt, without giving a reaſon to thy creature. I cannot charge thee with injuſtice, if thou ſhouldſt reſolve to keep me ſtill unreſolved. I know thou art not obliged to give me an account of any of thy matters; but, Lord, condeſcend ſo far to duſt and aſhes. Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.* If it be for ſin, a ſight of that (through thy grace) will humble me for it, and cauſe me to return to thee from it. If it be for trial, I ſhall undergo it with more patience, and my friends will behold me under it with more charity. Let all or ſome of theſe conſiderations prevail with thy majeſty, to open this ſecret to me, and expound the myſtery of my afflictions, *Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.*

Obſerve hence,

First, *An afflicted ſoul is very ſolicitous about the reaſon of his affliction,*

He that knows what it is to be in the dark, loves not to be in the dark. As natural, ſo moral light is ſweet, and ſpiritual light is ſweeteſt of all. Man would not be under concealments,

or

or have all about him mysteries and riddles. Evil men love not that light which shews them a rule against their sins, but any man would have light to shew him the reason of his sufferings. To be troubled we know not why, is an aggravation of our troubles, *That is more then felt, which is only felt.* As to know the cause of a disease, leads and lets us into the way of a perfect cure, so to know it is half a cure. *Job*, as here he doth, so heretofore he had complained that his way was hidden (*Chap.* 3.23.) and here, as before, he solicites that his way might be cleared to him.

Secondly observe, *A godly man may be long in the dark about the reason of Gods dealing with him.*

He labours alwayes to give an account of his own heart and wayes to God, but he is seldom able to give an account of the wayes of God toward him. The way of God both in mercy and in judgment is in the sea, and his foot-steps are not seen. As there is much of the Word of God, which a sincere heart after many prayers and much study, is not able to give a reason of: so also are there many of his works. The text of both is dark to us, till God make the Comment, and he sees it best sometimes to make us call and call, wait and wait before he makes it. There was famine in the Land of *Israel* three years, year after year, and yet *David* knew not the cause; doubtless he did often examine his own heart, and look into the Kingdom, to see what might be a provocation there, but saw nothing, till (after three years) he enquired of the Lord, who answered, *It is for Saul, and for his bloudy house, because he slew the Gibeonites* (2 Sam. 21.1.) It is more then probable that *David* had enquired of the Lord before that time. A holy heart, especially one so holy as *Davids* was, can hardly let personal affliction be a day or an hour old, without enquiring of the Lord about it: And shall we think that *David* let this National affliction grow three years old, before he enquired of the Lord about it? surely then this enquiry after the end of three years, was that grand and most solemn enquiry by *Urim* and *Thummim*, appointed at the last resort to God in cases of greatest difficulty and concernment; till *David* used this means, he found no resolution of that case, why the Lord contended with his Kingdom by famine, year after year. Neither had *Job* got resolution (when he thus complained) why the Lord contended with him, by sore diseases and mighty terrours, day after day.

But because it might yet be wondred at by some, how he durst adventure

adventure to put up such a request to God; he argues further in the next verse, that the state wherein he was, seemed to necessitate him to it, and to prompt or put that request into his mouth; As if he had said, *My condition cries aloud to me, that I should cry aloud to God, Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. For, far be it from me to think that the Lord delighteth in oppression, in breaking the work of his own hands, or in maintaining the works of wicked men: wicked Judges use to do so, whom God will never encourage (as with a light shining from heaven) by his example. Far be it from me to think so dishonourably of God, and therefore I am thus importunate to know the reason of his dealings with me, and what his thoughts are concerning me.*

Ne cui mirum videatur istud à me postulari res ipsa huc me, adegit, absit enim à me, ut tibi placere posse existimem violentam cujuspiam oppressionem. Bez.

Verse 3. *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress? that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked,*

Is it good, &c?

I am sure it is not, it is not pleasing unto thee to oppress, to despise the work of thy hands, thou delightest not to shine upon the counsel of the wicked: Thou canst not endure any of those evils acted by man, much less wilt thou act them thy self: Thou who art just, even justice it self, canst not love oppression; thou who art merciful, even mercy it self, will not despise the work of thine hands: thou who art holy, even holiness it self, how shouldest thou delight in wicked men? Thou art of purer eyes then to behold iniquity, and approve of it. What blasphemy then is it to imagine that thou dost practise it. Thy justice, thy mercy, thy holiness, are such as cannot admit the taint of these aspersions.

Nequaquam probat aliorum iniquam vim multò minus ipse alios opprimit. Sanct.

So then, in this third and fourth verse, *Job* reckons up those wayes, by which earthly men corrupt or pervert justice; and he removes them all from the Lord. Some men do, but God doth not oppress: Some men do, but God doth not destroy the work of his hands: Some men do, but God never doth shine upon the counsel of the wicked.

Omnes vias injustitiæ quibus terreni judices corrumpi & jus pervertere solent à Domino conatus amoliri. Merc.

Is it good to thee that thou doest oppress, &c?

Interrogatio sensum reddit omnino contrarium, nequaquam probat, &c. Sanct.

These interrogations (we see) are vehement negations, they flatly and peremptorily deny, what they seem doubtingly to enquire. The sense is, It is not good unto thee, yea, it is evil in thy sight

to

to oppress, &c. Thou hatest oppression, wrong dealing shall not dwell with thee. *Job* puts these questions, not as if he questioned, whether it were good to the Lord to oppress, or good to destoy the work of his hands, and to shine upon the counsel of the wicked; These were no points of controversie with him, nor did he seek resolution about them. Yea, he therefore begs a reason of the Lord, wherefore he was so oppressed, because he knew it was not good unto *Him* that he should oppress.

Ab absurdo argumentatur, quæ in Deo minimè sunt, tamen cogitari possunt ab infirmitate humana. Jun.

Is it good unto thee?] The Hebrew signifies three things.

טוב

Bonum triplex denotat. 1. *Utile.* 2. *Jucundum.* 3. *Honestum.*

First, That which is profitable.

Secondly, That which is pleasant.

Thirdly, That which is just, right, or honourable, any thing tending to reputation. And there may be this three-fold sense of it in this place.

1. *Is it good unto thee?* that is, comes there any advantage unto the Lord by oppressing? Surely none, What profit is there in our bloud?

Numquid tibi proderit. Vat.

2. *Is it good unto thee?* that is, Is it pleasing or delightful? Is the Lord taken with the afflicting of his people? I know he doth not willingly afflict the children of men.

3. *Is it good unto thee?* that is, Doest thou reckon it thine honour to lay thy hand severely upon thy poor creatures? No, it is thy glory to pass by a transgression. Now seeing it is not good unto thee any of these wayes, seeing thou hast no gain or profit by it, no joy or delight in it, no glory or honour from it. Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me; that's still the burden of this mournful Song, *Is it good unto thee.*

That thou shouldst oppress?

עשק

Significat opprimere aliquem verbis aut factis.

The word which we translate to oppress, signifies a double oppression. First, An oppression by our words. And secondly, An oppression by our actions, the oppression of the tongue, and the oppression of the hand. The tongue is a great tyrant, the tongue will lay on load, and draw bloud. The Vulgar understands it of this tongue-oppression, *Is it good for thee that thou shouldest calumniate or slander me?* that is, Give others occasion to speak evil of me. That is a good sense. Slander and censure wound deep, hard words bruise the credit and break the heart, as well as hard blows, bruise the flesh, and break the bones. But take

Numquid bonum tibi videtur, si calumnieris me. Vulg.

take it here rather for oppression by outward violence: So the word is often used (*Psal.*119.122.) *I have done judgment and justice, give me not over to mine oppressours*, to those, who would wrong me, because I have done right. And it noteth, as an open or violent oppression, so a cunning subtill oppression, a cheating, fraudulent oppression. All wrong, how close and cuuning soever, is oppression. We have that sense of the word (*Hos.*12.7.) *He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppress.* How doth a Merchant oppress? He comes not like a thief or a *Nimrod* with a sword in his hand, bidding you, Deliver your purse or your life, commanding you to give up your right, or your liberty, but while in buying and selling, in trading and dealing, he offers you a fair bargain, or as we say, a penny-worth for your penny, he smites you secretly, and cuts your throat (as famine doth) without a knife: the balances of deceit are in his hand: Balances are put for all instruments, or means of trading, by these he deceives: light weights oppress the State, as a heavy weight presses the body. The word imports also oppression by with-holding what is due, as well as by taking away what we duly hold (*Deut.*24.14.) *Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy*; that is, thou shalt not detain or keep back any part of his wages.

The word (you see) is of a large sense, *Is it good unto thee to oppress?* I know thou wilt not oppress me, either by speaking evil of, or over-censuring me; either by open violence, or by secret fraud; either by taking from me what I have, or by detaining from me, what I ought to have. Thou wilt not oppress either with tongue or hand; either as a robber with thy sword, or as a merchant with thy balances. Thus *Job* expostulates upon highest confidence, both of the justice and holiness of God; as if he had said, *Lord, I know thou doest not love to oppress; no thou art merciful and full of compassion. Whence is it then that thou seemest to act so unlike thy self? Is this thy pity to a poor creature, and thy love to the work of thy hands? Thou usest to rejoyce in the consolation of thy people, and mercy pleaseth thee; thou useth to send out rivers of goodness for wearied souls to bathe in, and streams of comfort for thirsty souls to drink and be refreshed in. How is it then that a bitter cup is put to my lips continually, and that I am overwhelmed in a salt sea, in a sea of gall and bitterness?*

Hence observe, *God is so good and gracious that he loves not to grieve his creature.*

Among

Among men (*Mich.* 7: 4) *The best of them is as a bryer, the most upright is sharper then a thorn hedge.* Even they that seem most gentle and compassionate, will yet sometimes scratch like bryars, and tear like thorns: but the Lord changeth not, neither do his compassions fail. The actings of God appear sometimes unsutable to his nature, but they are never so. When he breaks us to pieces, he delights not in our breakings, nor doth he ever break his own, but with an intent to bind them up again. God is so far from loving to oppress, that one of his most eminent works of providence is, to relieve those who are oppressed (*Ps.* 12 4) *For the oppression of the poor will I arise, saith the Lord.* And when the Lord arises, oppressors shall fall. *O Lord* ((cries *Hezekiah* in his sickness) I *am oppressed, undertake for me* (Isa. 38. 14) As if he had said, This disease like a mercileſs tyrant oppresses my spirit, death hath even mastered me, and got the victory over my house of clay. Lord, Come to my rescue, thou wast wont to deliver poor men as a prey out of the hand, yea mouths of their oppressors. O deliver me from this cruel sickness, which is ready to oppress my life, and hale me as a prisoner to the grave. *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress?* And

That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hand.

This clause hath the same sense in general with the former, *It is not good unto thee*, Is it neither pleasing, nor profitable, nor honourable, *That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hand.*

Some translaee this clause by oppression, *Is it good that thou shouldest oppress the work of thine hands?* The word in propriety signifies to *despise*: we have met with it more then once before; it noteth also loathing, yea abhorring. And it may very well bear that other sense of oppressing: for when a man loaths a thing and abhors it, he will quickly slight and oppress it: who cares what becomes of that which he abhors? These two are joyned together (2 *Kings* 17. 20.) *The Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoylers, untill he had cast them out of his sight.* When once the Lord rejected, or despised the seed of *Israel*, they were presently afflicted and delivered up to spoyling.

That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands] He means *h* himself

מאס *Significat rejicere cum fastidio, tanquam vile & contemptum quid.* Merc. in Pagn. *Ex fastidio & contemptu sequi solet rei contemptæ oppressio, aut abjectio.*

Huic hominem quem tuis manibus formasti de luto terræ. Dru.

יגע *Propriè laborem & lassitudinem quandam in efficiendo opere denotat, ex quo oratione hujus ei amplificatur.*

himself or any other man; all men being the work of Gods hands. The word which we translate *work*, strictly taken, signifies hard work, extream labour, labour with wearineſs. Here understand it in a large ſenſe, for God works not to wearineſs. And when after he had finiſhed the whole work of creation, it is ſaid by *Moſes* (Gen. 2. 2.) That *he reſted on the ſeventh day, from all the work which he had made.* The meaning is only this, he gave over, or ceaſed to work, not that his work put him to any pain or need of reſt.

But why is man called, *The work of Gods hands*? Hath God (who is a Spirit) hands, or any bodily parts?

By an ordinary figure in Scripture, hands and feet, eyes and ears, are aſcribed unto God. He is therefore ſaid to have hands, becauſe he works, not becauſe he works with hands. The hand is the inſtrument of work. Philoſophers call it, *The Organ of Organs*; man is called, The work of Gods hands, becauſe the hand is mans inſtrument in working. Now, whereas man is called, *The work of Gods hands*, it imports three things.

Firſt, An immediety in the work, or an immediate work. God made man himſelf without any help.

Secondly, An exactneſs in the work, the work proclaims an accurate Author, *The work of thy hands*, a ſpecial piece of work, No hand but thine could make ſuch a piece.

Thirdly, It notes the fulneſs and compleatneſs of the work, a work conſummate and perfect, having the laſt hand put to it. Man is the work of Gods hands in all and each of theſe ſenſes.

Heaven is called *a building of God, an houſe not made with hand*, (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.) Man is a building of God, and he is the work of Gods hands, yet God made man without hands, as much as he made heaven without hands. The Hand of God implies two things;

1. The power
2. The wiſdom } of God.

Man is the work of both, *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* Now if the beams and beauty of the divine nature be viſible in all that was created, then much more in man, who is the epitome or ſum of all that was created.

When

When *Job* puts the question, *Is it good unto thee to despise the work of thy hands?* he alludes to artificers, who having made an excellent piece, will not destroy or break it in pieces, no, they are very tender of their work, yea, they are apt to boast and grow proud of it. The instinct of nature teaches us to love, not only that which is our own by natural production, but that also which is our own by artificial conception or operation. Indeed if a man make a mean, or an unworthy piece, he despises it; such work discommends the workman, and he will break or burn it, rather then let it be made publick to the publishing of his own weakness or unskilfulness. Man was the master-piece of the whole visible Creation. Man was made (not as other creatures) to have a *being* only, but that he might *be in the likeness of God, and bear his image.* The Lord needs not be ashamed of, neither doth he despise any part of his work, much less this, which is the best and noblest part of his work. Hence observe in general,

Alio argumento injustitiam à Deo aufert, quòd artifices sua opera amare soleant. Merc.

Hoc corpus meum quod in utero matris meæ tam concinnè & aptè formasti, destrues?

Man is the work of God.

All of man, man throughout, is the work of God. The fabrick of his body is Gods work. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made*, saith *David*, *marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well; my substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, &c. In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them* (Psal. 139.14, 15.) A skilful Architect before he builds, draws a model, or gives a draught of the building in his book, or upon a table; there he will shew you every room and contrivance: in his book are all the parts of the building written, while as yet there are none of them, or before any of them are framed and set up. In allusion to Architects and other Artisans, *David* speaks of God, *In thy book were all my members written*; that is, Thou hast made me as exactly, as if thou hadst drawn my several members, and my whole proportion with a pen or pensil in a book, before thou wouldest adventure to form me up. The Lord uses no book, no pen to decipher his work. He had the perfect Idæa of all things in himself from everlasting, *But he may well be said to work as by pattern, whose work is the most perfect pattern.*

As the body, so the soul of man is the work of Gods hand too. His power and wisdom wrought it, and work mightily in it. In regard of bodily substance, the most inferiour creatures claim

kindred of man, and he may be compared to the beast that perisheth. But in regard of the soul, man transcends them all, and may challenge a neerness, if not an equality with the Angels. The body is to the soul, but as a mud wall, which imprisons some precious treasure, at best but like a gold ring to a sparkling diamond. If the more unworthy part of man be a work worthy of God, how much more is his more worthy part? There is yet somewhat in man of Gods making, which is better then either of these parts, and is indeed *all man. There is somewhat in man more excellent then man.* The qualities of a man are superiour to his nature: man by his nature differs only from a beast, but some men by their qualities differ from other men: one man hath better qualities then another, but no man hath a better nature then another. As the soul is more excellent then the body, and reason then sense, so inward gifts are more excellent then the soul, and grace then reason. These are the beauty, the gildings and engravings of the inner man. The *Assyrians* are called, the Work of Gods hands, not only in reference to Creation, but regeneration in Christ (*Isa.* 19. 25.) *Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.* 'Tis a promise of the calling the *Gentiles*, when they who were not a people should receive Christ, and be made the spiritual *Israel*, by the mighty work of God. This also is the work which *David* intends, when he invites all lands to serve the Lord with gladness, because *it is he that hath made us, and not we our selves* (*Psal.* 100. 3.) Hence the Apostle calls all beleivers emphatically, *The work of God* (Ephes. 2: 10.) *We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.* Man is the workmanship of God, as he is fitted for naturall and civill works, but he is most of all the workmanship of God, as he is fitted for holy and spirituall works. All is the work of God, but this is curious work, workmanship indeed.

From the whole, take three cautions.

First, Be not proud of what ye are, all's the work of God: How beautifull or comely, how wise or holy soever ye are, 'tis not of your selves. What hath any man either in naturals or supernaturals, which he hath not received?

Secondly, Despise not what others are or have; though they are not such exact pieces, though they have not such excellent endowments as your selves, yet they are what the hand of God hath wrought them, and they have what the hand of God hath

hath wrought in them. Be more thankful if ye are better framed, and have more workmanship bestowed upon you, sleight not those upon whom God hath bestowed less.

Thirdly, Despise not what your selves are; To do so is a sin, and a sin (in respect of the body) very common. Many are ashamed to be seen, as God hath made them, few are ashamed to be seen, what the devil hath made them. Many are troubled at small defects in the outward man: Few are troubled at the greatest deformities of their inner man; they call for no repairs, for no fresh colours to be laid on there; many buy artificial beauty to supply the defects of natural, who never had a thought of buying (without money) spiritual beauty to supply the defects of supernatural. The crookedness and distortions, the blackness and uncomelines of the soul are most deplorable, yet are they little deplored; we are called every day to mend and cure them, we are told where and how we may have all set right, and made fair again, and yet the most stir not, or not to purpose. God will not know any body at the last day, unless his souls be mended by grace; and some do so mend their bodies by art, that God will not know their souls at that day. Depart from me, I know you not (will be all their entertainment) ye have mended your bodies till ye have marr'd your souls. Besides, *What can the man do that cometh after the King?* saith *Solomon* (Eccles. 2.12.) The work of the wisest among men, is beyond the correction of an ordinary man. Much more may we say, *What can the man do that cometh after God?* The work of the most wise God is beyond the correction of the wisest among men. They who thus come after God to mend his work, lest they should be despised, will but make themselves more despicable. There is more worth in the very defects of Gods work, then in the perfection of mans. We may use means to help many bodily infirmities: but they who are discontent with Gods work, are quickly proud of their own, and will one day be ashamed of their own.

Secondly, Consider how *Job* argues, *Is it good that thou should-est despise the work of thy hands?* Hence observe,

It is an argument moving the Lord to much compassion, to tell him that we are his work, as we are creatures, and his work especially as we are new creatures.

When we are under such afflictions as threaten to ruine us, 'tis seasonable to tell the Lord he made us. *David* strengthens

prayer

prayer upon this argument (*Psal* 138.8.) *Forsake not the work of thy own hands*; all men love their own works, many dote upon them: Shall we think God will forsake his? See how the people of God plead with God in greatest distress (*Isai.* 64.8.) *But now, O Lord, thou art our Father, we are the clay, and thou our Potter, and we all are the work of thine hand, Be not wroth very sore, O Lord.* Wilt thou be angry with thy work? Lord, be angry with the works of wicked men, and destroy the work of Satan, Do not destroy the work of thine own hands; thy people are thy work, Hast thou not formed them for thy self? They will shew forth thy praise. That invitation to prayer (*Isa.* 45. 11.) seems to intimate, that this plea hath a kind of command upon God, *Thus saith the Lord, the holy One of Israel, and his maker; Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me:* while ye come to me under that notion, that these are the work of my hands, I cannot deny you; Do but name this, and it is a law upon me, ye may have any thing of me, or do any thing with me, while ye speak for the work of mine hands. Hence when the Prophet had put the Jews from that plea, they were a lost people, and their case was desperate, *This is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour* (Isa. 27.11.) As if he had said, Ye were wont (I know) to come to God with this motive of mercy, when he afflicted you; Lord, thou didst make and form us, therefore have mercy upon us, but this shall prevail no more: He that made you, will not have mercy on you; He that formed you will shew you no favour. There is but one argument stronger then this among all the Topicks of prayer, and that never fails, namely, that God hath redeemed us, or that we are his redeemed ones. God bestowed much cost upon us in the work of Creation, and therefore under that title he can hardly cast us off, but he hath bestowed so much cost upon us in the work of redemption, that he will never cast us off.

Further, the Scripture makes frequent use of this argument to repress the pride and presumption of man, and to stop his mouth when he begins to question, and call God to account about any of his dealings, with, why is it thus? Or, why am I thus? Thus the Prophet silences the murmurings both of mans heart and tongue (*Isa.* 45.9,10.) *Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker: shall the clay say to him that fashioned it, Why hast thou made me thus?* And

when

when the Apostle found unquiet and bold spirits busied in contesting with God about his eternal counsels, in chusing some and rejecting others, in shewing mercy to some and hardening others, he stops them with, *Who art thou, O man, that replyest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?* Remember thou art the clay, and he is the Potter. *That we are the work of Gods hand moveth his compassion towards us, and represseth our presumption against him.* We must not proudly dispute it out with him, for we are the work of his hands, and we may humbly plead with him, not to despise the work of his hands, or to

Shine upon the counsel of the wicked.

God is light, and he hath light, but he hath none for wicked men, or for their counsels.

Impiorum consilia illustrare, idem est quod juvare, & illorum cæptis ac conatibus favere.

To shine upon the counsel of the wicked notes three things.

First, To favour or delight in them.

Secondly, To succour or assist them.

Thirdly, To make them prosperous and successful.

David praying against his enemies, saith, *Let their way be dark and slippery*, Psal. 35.6. And when the Lord answered *Job* out of the whirlwind, he questions, *Who is this that darkneth counsel by words without knowledge?* (Job 38.2.) As to darken wayes, and to darken counsel is to hinder and trouble them: so to shine upon wayes and counsels is to help and favour them. *The Sun is the candle of the world, and Sun-shine is the comfort of the world.* The Psalmist prayes in this language, *Thou that dwellest between the Cherubims, shine forth*; that is, help and favour us; so it is expounded in the next verse, *Before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasses, stir up thy strength, and come and save us* (Psal. 80.1,2.) *Thou wilt light my candle* (was *Davids* confidence) *the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness; for by thee I have run thorow a troop, and by my God have I leaped over a wall* (Psal. 18 28,29.) that is, I have done great things, and I have overcome the greatest difficulties through thine assistance. Will God shine thus upon the counsel of the wicked? Or will he help the evil doer? *Job* denieth it, and therefore prayeth, Shew me why thou contendest with me. I know thou bearest no good will to those who are wilful in doing evil, nor takest thou pleasure in those, who take pleasure in iniquity.

But

But doth not the Lord give good success to those who are evil? Doth the way of the wicked never prosper? Prospereth it not so far sometimes, that godly men stumble in their way, and are offended?

I answer, God maketh his Sun to shine upon the evil and the good, but himself never shineth upon the evil. *Wicked men receive benefits from God, but they receive no blessings from God.*

There is a twofold light. First, The light of Gods providence. Secondly, The light of Gods countenance. The light of Gods countenance never shines upon the counsel of the wicked, they have only the light of his providence. He never shines upon them to favour them, though he often shines upon them to prosper them. *A man may have much good shewed him, and yet no good will shewed him.* The clouds and darkness, which at any time cover the counsels of the righteous, are clearer then all the light which shines upon the counsels of the wicked. God varies his dispensations often, but he never varies his affections; whatsoever he doth against the righteous, he never hates or dislikes them; and whatsoever he doth for the wicked, he never loves or likes them.

But who are the wicked intended in this text, upon whose counsels God will not shine? There are four apprehensions about it: who are wicked all agree, but who these wicked are is not agreed. Some refer the word to his friends, I know thou wilt not favour their sinful censures and rash judgments concerning me. Surely they shall receive little thanks and less reward for these discourtesies; thou wilt not go forth with them, or give witness to what they have done; thou wilt not confirm or attest what they have spoken.

Job (I grant) found little comfort from his friends: but I do not find that they gave him evil counsel, much less that they took wicked counsel against him. The Lord reproved them for the errour of their speech, but he did not reprove them for the wickedness of their persons. Indeed *Job* charges them deeply (Chap. 13. 7.) *Will you speak wickedly for God?* Yet I do not believe that he judged them wicked. A thing in it self wicked may be spoken, and yet the speaker not be wicked. Therefore I would not think *Job* aims at his friends, or fastens so deep a charge on them, though they had charged him so deep.

Secondly,

Secondly, Others conceive *Job* means the devil and his angles, *Wilt thou shine upon Satans counsel?* As when *Ahasuerus* (being enformed of that conspiracy against the Jews) enquired, *who is he? and where is he that durst presume in his heart to do so? Queen Esther said, the adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman* (Chap. 7. §. 6.) So might *Job* have answered the Lord. My adversary and enemy is this wicked Satan. He laid the plot and hath stirred up all these evils against me: I know Lord, thou wilt not take Satans part: Thou wilt not help him who would be the destroyer and murderer, who is the great malignant and projecter against servant.

Thirdly, Others take the *wicked* here, for the *Sabeans* and *Caldeans*, who were the instruments of Satan, in spoyling and robbing *Job* of his goods and substance. That they were wicked, we need not question; yet

Fourthly, Take it rather in generall, for all or any wicked men, upon whose wayes God seems to shine when he gives success to their works of darkness.

Hence observe,

First, *Wicked men are sometimes prospered in their counsels, and walk in pleasant (though in evil) wayes.*

God gives delight to those in whom he hath no delight. And they have many good things from him, who never had one good thought from him. Thousands are prospered and hated at the same time. When *Dionysius* (in the story) had rob'd an Idol-Temple, and at his return by sea had a fair gale and pleasant weather to wast him whom with the spoyles; See (said he) how the heavens smile upon us, and how the Gods are pleased with what we have done. The like conclusions many draw from the premises of outward prosperity: surely the true God is pleased with us: but there is a cloud upon this Sun-shine and darkness in all this light.

Observe,

Secondly, *The Lord hates the counsel of wicked men.*

He is so far from shining upon, that he, indeed darkens their counsels. *He* casts darkness upon them, even the darkness of his heavyest displeasure, when themselves think, and the world saith, all is light about them (*Zech.* 1. 15.) *Thus saith the Lord, I am very sore displeased with the Heathen that are at ease;* They had their pleasure, but God took no pleasure in them, *I am very sore*

displeased with these Heathens that are at ease, that is, I approve not their courses, yea my wrath is kindled against their persons. The light which shines upon wicked men, turns all at last into heat; and theh have alwayes the heat of Gods anger mixed with their light: a heat not to warm but to consume and burn them up. As when the Lord sends the clouds and darkness of outward affliction upon his own people, he sends likewise the beams of his everlasting love into their hearts: So he clouds and darkens wicked men, while his candle shineth upon their heads.

JOB Chap. 10. Vers. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?
Are thy dayes as the dayes of men? are thy years as mans dayes.
That thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?
Thou knowest that I am not wicked, and there is none that can deliver out of thy hand.

JOB proceedeth upon the same argument; and as in the third verse he had removed three things inconsistent with, and dishonourable to the justice God: So in the two Verses following, he removeth two more. And as he thus acquits the Lord from injustice or unrighteous dealing with him: so he appeals to the Lord (who was able (he knew) to do it upon certain knowledge) to acquit him from all the unjust charges with which his friends had burdened him, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*, &c.

Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?

The Question is to be resolved into this negation, *Lord, thou hast not eyes of flesh; Lord, thou seest not as man seeth*, as if *Job* had thus spoken, *Lord, I have been long afflicted with grievous pains, I am as a man hanging upon a rack, to draw out and force a confession from him; Lord, why is it thus with me? Why am I brought to such a tryal? I am sure it is not with thee as with mortal*

Judges,

Judges, who having eyes of flesh, can see no further then the outside of things, and know no more then is told them, and therefore must fetch out what lies in the heart of man by examination; and if examination will not do it, they must do it by torture; Lord there is no need thou shouldest take this course; thou canst enform thy self fully how it is with me, though I would not speak a word, though I am silent, yet thine ear hears the voice and understands the language of my spirit. Though I hide or cover my self, yet thy eye of thy omniscience looks quite thorow me; seeing then thou hast not eyes like the eyes of men, wherefore is it that thou enquirest by these afflictions after mine iniquity, and searchest (as men use to do) after my sin?

Hast thou eyes of flesh, or seest thou as man seeth?

God hath no eyes, much less eyes of flesh; God is a Spirit, and therefore he cannot have eyes of flesh; he is all eye, and therefore (properly) he hath no eyes. The eye is that special organ or member of the body into which the power of seeing is contracted: but God is all over a power of seeing. The body of a man hath severall parts, and severall honours and offices are bestowed upon every part. The eye hath the great office and honour of seeing committed to it. The eye is the light of the whole body, and knowledge is the eye of the soul. The eye of God is the knowledge of God. The Greeks express God by a word which signifies to see: and he is therefore said to have eyes, and to see, because the eye is a principall instrument, and seeing a principall means by which man receives knowledge. Naturalists tell us there is nothing in the understanding but that which is first in the sense. The senses are doors to the mind; the furniture and riches of that are conveyed in by the eyes or ears. These bring informations to the understanding Natural knowledge cannot have an immediate access to man, and 'tis but seldom that spiritual hath: Both are commonly let in by sense. The superiour powers must traffick with the inferiour, otherwise they make no gain. Though God hath no need of any help to bring in or improve his knowledge, yet that is ascribed to him by which knowledge is improved; he hath eyes, but not of flesh; he seeth, but not as man.

Ipsum nomen Dei Græcum hanc videndi efficacitatem præ se fert. Dei nimirum à θεᾶν spectare, contemplari dicitur. Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuit in sensu.

Hast thou eyes of flesh?

Flesh by a Synechdoche is put for the whole nature of man.

Oculi carnei, sunt secundum carnem judicantes.

The word was made flesh (Joh. 1. 14.) not body or soul, but Flesh, that is, *man* consisting of soul and body. Thus here, *eyes flesh*, that is, *mans eyes*. And so the latter clause of the verse is an exposition of the former. When he saith, *Hast thou eyes of flesh?* It is more then this, *Dost thou see as man seeth?* To have an eye of flesh, is to judge according to the flesh, and to see as man seeth, is to see no more then man.

When *Samuel* was sent to anoint a King over *Israel* in the place of *Saul* (1 *Sam.* 16. 7.) the Lord said concerning the first-born of *Jesse*, *Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him*; The reason added is this, *For the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart*. There we have *Job*'s doctrine of Gods seeing delivered by God himself. *Samuel* thought he who made the fairest shew to the eye of man, must needs be the man who was fairest in the eye of God; but the Lord seeth what is not seen, and often findes most reality in the least appearance; he who hath not eyes of flesh sees beyond the flesh.

There are seven differences between the eye of flesh or mans eye, and the eye of God.

1. Mans eye is but a means, or an instrument of knowledge: Gods eye is his knowledge. The act and the faculty are not distinct in God. All in God is act, Neither is God another thing from his act: whatsoever is ascribed to him, is himself. The eye of God is Gods seeing. The knowledge of God is Gods knowing. The love of God is Gods loving.

2. Man must have a two-fold light to see by; an inward light, the light of the eye, and an outward light, the light in the air: without both he cannot see; a man doth not see (as Naturalists speak) by sending forth a beam or a ray from his eye to the object, but by receiveing or taking in a beam or ray from the object into his eye; The object issues its species to the eye, which being joyned with the visive power of the eye, man seeth: But God seeth in himself, of himself, and from himself, he needs no outward light. Christ is described having a fiery eye, *His eyes were as a flame of fire*, (*Revel.* 1. 14. *Rev.* 2. 18.) Even nature teacheth us, that those creatures, which have fiery eyes see in the dark, and see best when it is darkest, because they see by sending forth a beam or a flame from their eyes, which at once apprehends the object, and enlightens the passage to it. God who commanded light to come

out

out of darkness for the use of man, commands light in darkness for his own. *The darkness hideth not from thee* (saith David) *but the night shineth as the day. The darrness and the light are both alike to thee. There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where any of the workers of iniquity can hide themselves*, Job 34. 22. Thus *God hath not eyes of flesh; he seeth not as man seeth.*

3. Man seeth one thing after another: his eye is not able to to take in all objects at once; he views now one, and then another, make his judgement of them. But God seeth all things together; he beholdeth all at one view; his eye takes and gathers in all objects, and all that is in every object by one act. *The Lord looketh from heaven, and beholdeth all the sons of men; from the place of his habitation he looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth* (*Psal.* 33. 13, 14.)

4. An eye of flesh seeth at a distance, and at such a distance. Naturalists tell us, here must be a due distance be tween the eye and the object. If you put the object too near the eye, the eye, cannot see it, *That which is sensible put upon the sense, takes away sensation.* Again, if the object be very remote, the eye cannot make any discovery of it, the eye cannot see far, and it cannot discern so far as it can see. We may see a thing, and not know what we see. But the eye of the Lord seeth and discerneth at all distances. There are none so neer him, but he knows what they are, neerness doth not hinder his sight; and there are none so far from him, but he can discover what they are, remoteness doth not hinder his sight. And indeed all things are present with him, as in time, so in place; *God is nearest even next to every object*: He is in every place, yet not inluded by any, he is in every thing, yet not mixed with any (*Prov.* 15. 3) *The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. His eyes are upon the wayes of man, he seeth all his goins* (Job 34. 21.) and that this seeing is a distinguishing sight, another Scripture clears to us, *His eye-lids try the children of men* (Psal. 11. 5.) Let them be what they will, and where they will, his eye-lids do not only see, but try, that is, he hath a distinct, and a certain knowledge, or a criticall sight of the state and condition of every man.

Sensibile positum super sensum tollit sensationem.

Deus non solum est proximus objecto, sed est intimè cum illo conjunctus

5. Man seeth but the colour and skin, the face and out-side of things or persons, but God seeth the in-sides, and looks into the very bowels of them. He is a *searcher and discerner of the heart*: He seeth the spirit as soon as the face. Our clothes are not more open

open to him then our breasts and bosoms. An Heathen wished for a window there, and if we had windowes there, we could not see what's there. An eye of flesh cannot read the meaning of our spirits; but the Lord can look into the heart without a window, yea we are all window to him, and he at every turn looks not only upon us, but into us. It was propheſied of Christ, (*Isa.* 11.3.) *He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes; neither reprove after the hearing of his ears*; that is, he shall not judge as a meer man, but as God; he shall not judge according to fair appearances, or flying reports, *He shall judge with righteousness, and reprove with equity.* Man (whose eyes are of flesh) should not judge according to appearance, yet because his eyes are of flesh, he cannot judge of that which doth not appear. But God who calleth those things which are not, as if they were, judgeth of those things which appear not, as if they did appear.

6. An eye of flesh may be deceived. The sight of man is subject to manifold deceptions. Many things put a stop to the sight of the eye. The eye of man is in danger of as many fallacies, as the understanding; and the understanding is entangled with many fallacies by the eye. But there is no errour in the sight of God, nor any deception of his eye; you cannot by any art or device, by any policy or hypocrisie, by any masques or disguises, by any simulations or dissimulations make that appear to him which is not, or make it appear to him otherwise then it is, *The heart of man* (saith the Lord) *is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?* (only the Lord who makes, can answer this challenge, so he doth in the next words) *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his wayes, and according to the fruit of his doings.* How can that which is deceitful receive according to its doings, but by knowing all its doings and all its deceits? As the tongue (the greatest troubler of the world) no man can tame: so the heart (the greatest impostour in the world) no man can discover but God, and he can do it easily, and doth it continually.

7. When it is said, the Lord hath not eyes of flesh, he seeth not as man seeth, the meaning is, his knowledge is not imperfect as the knowledge of man is An eye of flesh hath been but a while & can be but a while, and therefore cannot attain much knowledge, *We are but of yesterday, and know nothing* (saith *Bildad* c. 8.) *He that*

hath

hath but little experience, must needs have more then a little ignorance. Experience breeds knowledge, and brings to perfection in knowledge. The eye of God is from everlasting. If he had not (as he hath) all knowledge in and from himself, he might have fetcht it in before this time, from what he hath seen. And he (having seen all things) must needs have perfect knowledge, whose knowledge had been perfect, though he had never seen any of these things.

Besides, As this phrase, an eye of flesh, imports thinness of experience, and thence imperfections of knowledge, so grossness of spirit, and dimness of understanding to attain knowledge. When *Peter* made that gracious confession (*Mat.* 16. 16.) *Thou art Christ the Son of the Living God*; Christ answers, *Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood* (that is, *man*) *hath not revealed this unto thee, but my father which is in heaven:* as if he had said, All men are flesh and blood, so dull-sighted and blind, that they could never have perceived this truth by any study or observation, it comes only by gift and revelation.

Caro significat aliquid pingue obtusum crassum minime subtile aut perspicax.

The eye of God is not an eye of flesh in this sense neither. All spirits have much clearness of understanding, much sharpness and quickness of apprehension. The devil being a spirit, though now a wicked spirit, hath one name *from knowledge*. How much more knowing is he, who is, *The Spirit*, the Creatour of the spirits of all flesh, and the Creator of those spirits which subsist without flesh?

Dæmon.

Further, Sight is put for judgement, and seeing for judging. Judging is an act beyond knowing. Judgment is the result of knowledge: So, *Thou dost not see*, is, *Thou dost not judge as man doth.*

1. Mans judgement is often hindered by his affections. His judgement is hindered by divers affections, especially by love, and the nearness of relations; man can hardly see a fault and a friend, a sin and son together. Love makes knowledge as ignorance, and light as darkness. Christian Charity covers a multitude of sins from private revenge, and harsh censures; But humane charity covers a multitude of sins from publick justice, and wholsome admonitions. The former keeps from rigid severity, this endangers to cockering flattery. It is not thus with God, *He seeth not as man seeth.* They who have the greatest interest, the nearest relation to God, are seen what they are, and shall be judged

Num vides more hominum, et sicut illi ex facie judicas ut affectibus ducaris sicut illi?

judged as they are. God hath (indeed) an infinite largeness of affection to poor sinners, and the lap of his garment of love covers every day a multitude, yea many multitudes of sins. But he doth not this, because his love to the persons offending hinders his eye from seeing, but because his Son having satisfied his justice for the persons offending, he turns away his eye from seeing their sins. God proclaims himself at once, *The God pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin, and that will by no means acquit the guilty* (Exod. 34. 7.) There is nothing but the name of his Son, and of his Son suffering, which turns his eye from sin. *He will espy and punish*, or espy to punish all our faults through all other titles and interests whatsoever.

Again, Mans judgement is clouded by wrath and malice. He cannot see the innocency of those he hates, or do them justice to whom he bears no affection. The want of love hinders an eye of flesh, as much as the inordinacy or excess of it. But though the Lord be angry and displeased with man, yet he wrongs no man. *The wrath of man cannot work the righteousness of God, but the wrath of God works righteousness.* He never gives more then right to those he loves most, nor less then right to those he hates most. That which we call passion in God, is acted with highest reason, his anger never errs.

2. Man is much swayed in judgemen: by the power, pomp and splendor of men. We are apt to think they have most worth in them, who are worth most. And that they are good, with whom all's well. Even the Saints are toucht with this infirmity: The Apostle *James* (Chap. 2. 2 3,) bespeaks them thus, *If there come into your Assembly a man with a gold ring in goodly apparel, and there come in a poor man in vile rayment, and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay cloathing, and say unto him, Come and sit here by me in good place, and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my foot-stool; Are ye not partiall in your selves, and Judges of evil thoughts?* that is, are ye not condemned in your selves, and convinced in your own consciences, that you do evil, and so that your thoughts have been evil, which moved you to do so? can you chuse but judge this an evil thought, to think him the best man that weareth the best clothes, and him a vile person that is in vile apparrel? thus men, yea good men may mis-judge of men. But the Lord seeth not as man seeth, it is not good clothes, but a good heart; it is not a gold ring, but a golden conversation which

which he accepts; wickedness is abominable in his eye, though it sit upon a throne; and holiness shines in his eye, though it lye upon a dunghill. Holiness is not less lovely to him, because cloathed with rags, nor unholiness not less loathsome to him, because it goes in a gay coat. 'Tis well conceived that *Job* had reference to his own condition when he spake thus; he lay in a woefull plight, all over sores, and boyls, and filthiness, yet (saith he) *Lord, I know thou seest not as man seeth*; Thou dost not therefore think me the worse, because I am thus ill. I am even a loathing, not only to others, but to my self, yet I know thou dost not loath me; thou hast not a bad opinion of me, because my condition is thus bad.

Forte Job respicit ad carneos judicum oculos, qui ex specie & carnis splendore judicant, sordidos vero & squalidos contemnunt. At Deus sordida & humilia non despicit. Sanct.

3. Man judgeth the cause by the effect, the tree by the fruit, the man by his actions, t a's the way of mans judge ment, and so man ought to judge. We ought to think well of them, who do well; and when the hand is clean, charity bids us say the heart is clean too. But *the Lord seeth not as man seeth*; he in judging men transcends the rule, he gives men to judge by. He judgeth the fruit by the tree, the effect by the cause, and the action by the man; he had respect to *Abel*, and then to his offering. If the worker please him not, neither doth his work; as he makes so he sees the tree good, and then the fruit good. Till the man mends, his manners never mend in Gods esteem. When a good tree brings forth evil fruit, or an evil tree good fruit, 'tis accidentall to them both, not natural. God judgeth us by what we alwayes are, not by what we sometimes act either in good or evil.

In this sense *Job* comforts himself, that whatsoever fruit he might seem to bring forth, yet the Lord judged him not (as his freinds did) by some unsavoury speeches that came from him, but by the savourines of that spirit which was in him. He knew God judged him by the settled temper of his inward man, and the soundnes of his minde, not by the casuall distemper of his outward man, or the sound of his tongue. *Job* was a good tree, and *the root of the matter was in him*. And *Job* was assured God would not condemn him for his fruit, if some of it were bitter and unpleasant, while he saw his root was good.

4. Man must take time to hear and discusse every case, to find and beat out the truth of every controversie, but God judgeth all at an instant; the matter is no sooner before him, but

he knoweth it fully: indeed the matter was ever before him, and ever fully known, he knew it from eternity: *things are known to him before they are, by whom all things are.* The Lord needeth not to put questions, or to be informed by confessions. God is able to prevent our questions with resolutions, and to give us answers before we give him our doubts (*Joh.* 16. 30.) *Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee*; he that is acquainted with our doubts before we propose them, can answer them as soon as we propose them. Seeing it is thus (saith *Job*) why am I held so long upon the rack to draw out the matter from me? I know thou dost not judge me as man judgeth, by enquiring into or comparing circumstances and actions, answers and questions. Thou art able to make out a judgment of me and of my condition from thy own knowledge, without the contribution of my answers to thy questions, or of other mens testimonies concerning my actions, *Thou seest not as man seeth.*

ראה *Est aliquando despicere, & cernere cum contemptu.*

Lastly, *To have eyes of flesh*, and to see as man, is to see with scorn, or with disdain. The original word which we translate to *see*, put alone, signifies somtimes to despise. The Prince of *Tyrus* is threatned thus (*Ezek.* 28. 17.) *I will lay thee before Kings, that they may behold* (that is, despise and deride) *thee*; And the Spouse in the *Canticles* (Chap 1.6.) deprecates, *Look not upon me, because I am black, because the Sun hath looked upon me*; that is, God hath looked upon me with a scorching eye of displeasure, and made me black with troubles, do not ye look upon me with a scornful eye of disdain, because of my blackness. Thus God seeth or looketh not as man seeth; he looketh not disdainfully upon a poor afflicted soul, as men do upon their friends in their affliction, or as ye my friends do upon me in mine affliction.

This is the fourth dishonourable thought, which *Job* removeth from God. *His eyes are not eyes of flesh, he seeth not as man seeth*, either in reference to the truth or manner, the clearness or speediness, the certainty or impartiality, the infallibility or charity of his judgment. Upon all which his former request is again to be inferred, *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.*

He proceedeth to a fifth, which he also by way of interrogation removeth from God, and so vertually reneweth the same petition.

Verse

Verse 5. *Are thy dayes as the dayes of men? Are thy years as mans dayes?*

I know they are not.

Are thy dayes as mans dayes?

Some interpreters take the word *day* for *judgment*, *Are thy daies as mans dayes?* that is, are thy judging dayes, or thy judgment given upon those dayes, like mans dayes, or the judgment which man giveth? We have the word in that sense (1 *Cor.* 4 3.) where the Apostle concludes in his own case, *It is a very small thing with me to be judged of you, or of mans judgment*; the Greek is, *To be judged of mans day*: and according to the idiom of that language in some countryes, the day of a man is put for the judgment of a man. Though others conceive that *Paul* calls it a day rather then a judgment, in allusion to that last day, wherein God will sit in judgment upon the whole world. So the meaning of *Job* is plainly this, *The Lords judgment is not like mans judgment*; This Exposition falls in with the sense of the former verse, men judge by outward proofs and probabilities, by questions and interrogatories, by testimonies and witnesses: God needs none of these humane helps in his day of judgment; yet in *Jobs* case he carried it, as if he needed them. The suit depending so long before him, and such variety of experiments and tryals, being put upon, or taken of him.

Ponitur dies pro judicio ex Cilicum idiotismo. Hieron. *Putarim Paulum potius diem maluisse dicere, quam judicium, ut alluderet ad diem illum supremum in quo Dominus ipse judex sedebit.* Bez.

But, we may better interpret *dayes* for a part of time; and so, *Are thy dayes as mans dayes?* is, *Art thou short-liv'd as man is?* The word *Man*, signifies man in his worst condition, *Are thy dayes like the dayes of a weak man?* of a miserable sickly man? Are they like the dayes of a man, whom we number among the dead, and who is giving up the Ghost every hour? There are some men, whom we call *long-liv'd*, that is, men who in probability may live very long: we say of a healthy strong man, we would take a lease of his life, or if we were to take a lease for lives, we would put his life in for one: he is a man of a good complexion and constitution, a man like to live, and see many dayes. But, saith *Job*, *Are thy dayes as the dayes of Enosh?* As the dayes of a weak sickly man, as the dayes of one, who looks as if he would drop into the grave every day; as the dayes of a very borderer upon death, of the next neighbour, *and heir apparent to the King of terrours?* Lord,

Enos *cujus vitæ duratio brevissima & pene nulla.*

I am sure thy dayes are not as the dayes of such a weakling, of such mouldring sickly clod of earth. This sense may have a double reference.

1. To the knowledge of God concerning *Job*.
2. To the manner of Gods dealing with *Job*.

Perstat Job in excludenda ignorantia à Deo judice; Dies hominis significant vitam brevissimam, quæ cum multa ignorantia conjuncta est. Sanct. *Ars longa, vita brevis.* Hippocr.

1. *Thy dayes are not as the dayes of man*, thou hast had, and hast time enough to gather knowledge and experience, if thou didst need such help to make thee more knowing. It was the ancient complaint of that great *Physitian*, when he saw how much of his art he had to learn, and how little time he had to learn it in, *Art is long, and time is short*, what can I learn in such a span-long life as mine? Hence it is conceived that though the fathers before the flood (some of whose lives reached eight or nine Centuries) wanted the help of *Lybraries* and *Academies*, which we enjoy; yet, that by the experience of so many years, they gathered a great stock of knowledge, and proved men of eminent learning; Men whose dayes are not as the dayes of ordinary men, attain knowledge beyond ordinary men. How then can the Lord want any perfection of the most perfect knowledge, who numbreth not only by hundreds and thousands of years, but by an eternity of years. His knowledge must needs be full, concerning the state both of things and persons, who not only hath *Antiquity of dayes*, but is the *Ancient of dayes* (Dan. 7 9.) Many men have lived so many dayes, that they are justly called *Ancient*, but no man ever lived or shall live so long, as to deserve this title, *Ancient of dayes*. God is called the *Ancient of dayes*, not only because he hath been many dayes, yea all the dayes that ever have been, but because he is *ancienter then dayes*; *He is the dayes ancient, for he made the day. His dayes cannot be like mans days, who made five dayes ancienter then man.* God hath more then all dayes, therefore he hath all knowledge: he hath all experience, therefore he hath neither ignorance nor nescience. Upon this ground *Job* argues it out with God, that he must needs know all things, who was before all times; and that he was acquainted with him better then all men, who lived at that day, because he lived and was acquainted with what would be, before man had a day, even from eternity.

2. These words, *Thy dayes are not as mans dayes*, may refer to the dealings of God with *Job*; As if he had said, *Lord, why then dost thou make such haste to enquire after me? why dost thou so incessantly follow me with afflictions? why dost thou keep me upon the rack*

rack from day to day, night and day, and wilt give me no rest? Lord, thou needest not fear to lose time, for thou hast all time at thy command: thou canst not want opportunity, who hast eternity. The reason why man is called upon so earnestly, to redeem the time, is, because he hath so little time given him, and no time at all, but what is given him. His dayes are short dayes, and they are but few, and (which should provoke him more to haste) he knows not how few; unless he lay hold upon the present day, he is not sure of any day. But Lord, thou art Lord of time, and Master not only over thy work, but also over thy dayes, thou canst allow thy self as many dayes as thou pleasest to do thy work in. Why then doest thou deal thus severely with me, as if thou wert afraid thou shouldst overslip thy day, or want a season to deal with me in.

Deo nihil affert novi crastina dies.

Again, when he saith, *Are thy dayes as mans dayes?* it may refer to the Changes which happen in the dayes of man: the dayes of man are sometimes fair, and sometimes cloudy, sometimes he hath good dayes, and sometimes he hath ill dayes, therefore he must take his time, and lay hold upon his opportunity. He must make his hay while the Sun shines, who cannot command the Sun to shine. But the dayes of the Lord are (like himself) alwayes the same, alwayes alike. *There are no changes of time to him, who is himself unchangeable.*

Aliam suarum miseriarum causam excludit à Deo. q. d. si non esset firma Dei voluntas, atq; benevolentia erga suos, sed innata illi esset inconstantia, nihil mirum esset si me, quem quondam ingentibus beneficiis cumulavit odio prosequatur.

Lastly, *Are thy dayes as the dayes of man?* may have reference to man himself: man is as mutable a creature, as his time is; and man is mutable, not only in his condition, but in his affection: now he loveth, anon he hateth; now he rejoyceth, anon he sorroweth; now he esteemeth, anon he rejecteth; now he imbraceth, anon he contemneth, *Lord* (saith *Job*) *I know thou art not in thy dayes as man is in his; where thou art once a freind, thou art alwayes a freind; whom thou lovest thou lovest for ever. Thy affections are as unchangeable as thy nature.*

There is a difference in the latter clause of the verse, for whereas he saith in the first, *Are thy dayes as the dayes of man?* in the second he saith, *Are thy years as mans dayes?* The dayes of God in the first part, are the same with the years of God in the second. But man hath not years ascribed to him in the second. The time of man is so short that it is reckoned by the shortest compleat time, a day. And when *David* computes the longest date of mans life, he doth not say, *The years of man are threescore years and ten, but the dayes of our years are threescore years and ten* (Ps. 90 10.)

old. בימי שנר

There

There is yet another difference in the originall about the word *man*. In the first clause the Hebrew word for man was *Enosh*, here it is *Geber*, which signifies a strong man, a mighty man, a man of the most masculine spirit, and strongest body, of the most vigorous abilities, and greatest probabilities to live long. A man of brass, and heart of oak, rather then of clay, and dust of the earth, *Lord, thy dayes are not only not as the dayes of Enosh*, a weak, sickly man, but, *Thy years are not as the dayes of Geber, as the dayes of* the mightest and healthiest, of the strongest and stoutest among the sons of men.

Observe hence more distinctly the difference between the dayes of God, and the dayes of man.

First, *Gods day is the day of eternity.*

Mans dayes are but dayes of time. God is said, *To inhabit eternity* (Isa. 57. 15.) that is, he is fixed in eternity, he is without beginning and without end, yea his dayes are without succession of dayes. All the dayes of God are but a day. Not only are a thousand years to him as one day, but eternity is to him as one day. All that God doth is said to be done to *day*; *Thou art my son, to day have I begotten thee* (Psal. 2. 7.) yet he speaks (say some) of the eternal generation of the Son: or, as it referreth to the resurrection of Christ (so the Apostle expounds it, *Acts* 13. 33.) God calls that time, *To day*, though it came a long time after: all is present with God; *Past and to come in relation to God, is neither past, nor to come, all is now or to day.* That was not past to God which never had beginning, the eternall generation of his Son: nor was that to *come* to God which was alwayes before him: The temporall resurrection of his Son, *To day have I begotten thee*, is the most proper stile for God.

Tempus est mensura hominum habens principium & finem; viternitas est Angelorum principium habens, sed non finem; æternitas est propria Deo, nec principium habens, nec finem.

Some distinguish thus between these three, *Eternity*, *Eviternity* and *Time*. Eternity is that which is peculiar unto God, his are the dayes of eternity. Eviternity is proper to Angels and spirits, which have a beginning, but shall have no end. Time is the portion and lot of man, who hath had a beginning, and shall have an end. *Time* is the measure of those things, which actually corrupt and change. *Eviternity* is the measure of things incorruptible and unchangeable, not in themselves, but by the appointment of God. *Eternity* is peculiar to God, in whom it is absolutely impossible any change should be. Time hath continual successions, eternity a constant permanency, eviternity partakes of both. Hence

The

The second difference, Man dayes are moveable, the dayes of God move not.

Thirdly, mans dayes being past cannot be recalled; Gods day is ever within his call, for, that which is past is as much present to him, as that which is present; and that which is to come is as much present to him, as that which is. *Mans day was, is, and shall be, Gods day alwayes is; his name is, I am; It was, and it will be, are divisions and fragments, morsels and bits of time, eternity is an It is.*

This teaceth us; First,

That God hath time enough to do his work in.

His dayes are not as mans dayes. *He needs not hasten his work, lest he should lose his opportunity who is possessed of eternity.* And

Secondly, This (by the way) sheweth us the infinite happiness and unconceivable blessedness of God; *His dayes are not as mans dayes*; one of mans dayes carrieth away one comfort, and the next a second; this day brings one comfort, and the next a second: and so he looseth or receiveth his comforts by dayes and by dayes, by the fluxes and refluxes of time. God hath all his happiness in eternity, that is, he hath all at once. Time neither bringeth nor carrieth away from God. He enjoyeth as much at this present, whatever he had; as what he hath at this present; and he enjoyes as much as what shall be, as he doth what is present; he enjoyeth all at once. God hath not one thing after another, but all together. Eternity is the longest in duration, and the shortest in fruition; not that the enjoyment of any thing there is short, but because in the shortest enjoyment there is all; Every moment of eternity being filled with all the blessedness of eternity.

Thirdly, This shews the reason why the Lord taketh such leisure to do his work; he doth not precipitate or thrust on his designes, because he may take what time he will. God hath all time at his command. Men bear sway and rule over persons and places, God only ruleth times. Man hath not one day in his power, not only not the day to come, but not the day present. *Go to now* (saith the Apostle *James* Chap. 4. 13, 14.) *ye that say to day, or to morrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain, whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow*; Nor indeed doth any man know whether he shall be on the

Æternitas est e quæ nihil habet mutabile, ibi nihil est præteritum quasi jam non sit, nihil futurum quasi nondum sit, quia non est ibi nisi est, Aug. in Ps. 101.

Erat & erit nobis temporis fluxæq; naturæ segmenta sunt.

Æternitas est semper et immutabile esse.

the morrow, or on all the day wherein he is. God can boast of to morrow, that is, of eternity, or of all time to come. Man cannot boast of to morrow, that is, of the next day, no nor of the next time to come of the same day. Hence it is that man must hasten, lest he miss his season. When *David* had *Saul* at an advantage (1 *Sam.* 24.5.) they about him advise him to make use of it, and not let it slip, *Behold the day, of which the Lord said unto thee*, &c. Sr having such a day, take hold of it; if you let this go, you may never see such another. Time is no part of the dominion of Kings. So likewise *Abishai* counsels *David* upon the same advantage (1 Sam. 26.8.) *God hath delivered thy enemy into thine hand this day* (Let him go this day, and probably thou shalt never have the like day again.) *Now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee with the spear, even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.* I can dispatch him at one time, and possibly thou shalt not have a second time. In a good work, it is good, yea 'tis best to do our work at once, and not to expect (what we may, or may never have) a second time, when we have a time. *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* He hath much hardness, but no wisdom in his heart, who hopes to do that good to morrow, which he resolvs to neglect untill to morrow. A wise man may hope to do that to morrow, which he cannot do to day, but it is high'st folly to resolve upon a neglect of any duty this day upon a hope of doing it next day. It is said, *Revel.* 12.6. *Wo to the inhabitants of the earth, because the devil is come down, having great wrath*, (why so angry?) *because he knoweth that his time is but short.* When the devil knows he hath but a little time, he will do as much work as he can, and do it presently, he sees all will scape out of his hands else. Only the Lord hastens not, neither needeth he to hasten his work at any time upon this ground, because he hath but a short time. He can take what time he will, and make his day as long, and his dayes as many as himself pleaseth, for the actings of his counsels, whether to punish or to shew mercy. And hence it is that he delayeth, till wicked profane spirits wonder, yea scoff at his delay, and think, surely the Lord will never do any such thing as he hath threatned or promised, because he stayeth so long before he doth it; whereas indeed to him *that inhabiteth eternity*, deferment is no delay, though to us it seem so, whose times are measured out by inches and hours, by moments and by minutes. Those profane wretches (*Isa.* 5. 19.) call the Lord, and provoke him to action, *Let him*

make

make speed and hasten his work, that we may see it. The Lord appears slow and slack to many men, but *the Lord is not slack as some men count slackness* (2 Pet. 3. 9.) Men think he is slack, when he is only patient, and themselves ignorant, *That a thousand years to the Lord are but as one day*; God doth not measure time by our pole, nor cast it up by our Arithmetick. Eternity doth not only, like the unjust steward, bid us write, *fifty for an hundred*, but *one for a thousand*, and (which bears the disproportion of divers hundreds in every one of that thousand) one day for a thousand years. Time is not only a small thing, but nothing unto God, *Mine age* (saith *David*) *is nothing unto thee* (Psal. 39. 5.) *And if all Nations before him are as nothing, if they are counted to him less then nothing* (Isa. 40. 17.) Then not only the age of man, but the ages of all men added together, are before him as nothing, and are counted to him less then nothing. *Surely he cannot want time to do all things, before whom all things are nothing.* He cannot want time to pour out his judgements and to empty the vials of his wrath upon wicked men, nor can he want time to fulfil his promises, and to make good every word of blessing which he hath spoken to, or concerning his own people; Wicked men! Doe not ye hope; Godly men! Do not ye fear, God will not doe what he hath said, because he hath not already done it. He hath not lost his time or season, because he hath not accepted that, which ye thought to be the time or season. Christ warns his Disciples (*John* 9. 4.) to make haste about their work, for the *night* (namely of death) *cometh wherein no man can work*; while you have the day, doe your work, for I know what day yours is, your day will be gone, and the night will come, then you can work no more: But Gods day fears no night, what ever comes he can do his work. The Preacher gives the same counsel upon the same ground (*Eccles.* 9.) *Whatsoever thine hands findeth to do, do it with all thy might*; lay hold on the fore-lock of time, why? *There is no wisdom or counsel in the grave whither thou goest*; When thou diest there is an end of all thy working time; doe thy work well, for thou canst not recall a day of thy life to mend thy work in, neither canst thou work at all in that night of death. The Lords day knows nothing of a grave, nor is his Sun acquainted with going down; if he seem slack to his work, or slack at his work this day and the next, &c. yet he hath another day at his call, and after that another and another, all which are to him but one

day. Therefore he takes or leaves, defers or hastens, comes or goes at pleasure. *Are thy dayes, O Lord, as mans dayes? Are thy years as the dayes of man?* I know they are not.

But why doth *Job* make so many of these negative queries? The next words will answer.

Verse 6. *That thou enquirest after mi n iniquity, and searchest after my sin.*

Here's the reason of those former Questions. As if he had said, *Lord, surely thou needest not search and examine me in this manner, seeing it is neither thus nor thus with thee, It is not good to thee to oppress or to despise the work of thy hands, thou hast not eyes of flesh or dayes of man.*

That thou enquirest after mine iniquity.

בקש *Significat non tam verbis & interrogatione, quam actionibus & summo studio aliquid inquirere; & non raro de pœna et nece procuranda accipitur.*

The Original signifies an enquiry two wayes. 1. By word. 2. By actions. By somwhat done, or by somwhat spoken. And it signifies both to do and speak with great intention and heat of spirit. The word is also applyed to those enquiries which are made by torture, when the party is suspected for concealment of the matter under enquiry. Which way of examination is called by the Latines, the bringing of a man to *question*. That last Engine, which was invented to support the tottering state of *Rome*, wherein poor souls are put to extream tortures, to force confessions or self accusations (that I say) is called the *Inquisition*, and the Judges *Inquisitours*; because inquisition or enquiry (according to the word of the Text) is there made after the iniquities of men, after their supposed heresies and heretical practices against the *Romish* Church. *Job* seems to allude to such wayes of examination; why doth the Lord enquire after mine iniquity, by sore judgments and terrible afflictions, by strong pains and mighty terrours?

At lowest, the word signifies a diligent search, or a scrutiny with utmost industry; even such as they use who maliciously hunt for the precious life. The Lord saith to *Moses*, return into *Ægypt*, for all the men which sought thy life are dead (*Exod.* 4.19.) It is this word. So (1 *Sam.* 22. 23.) *abide thou with me* (saith *David* to *Abiathar*) *fear not, for he that seeketh my life, seeketh thy life.* When revenge makes a search, it is a diligent search: malice hath a piercing eye, and enquires narrowly. That gracious promise

miſe is thus expreſſed (*Jer.* 50. 20.) *In thoſe dayes the iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none, and the ſins of Judah, and they ſhall not be found.* *Job* complains here, *Thou enquireſt after mine iniquity*; there the promiſe is, *In thoſe dayes the iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for*, or, *enquired after, and it ſhall not be found*; that is, ſuppoſe the inquity of *Iſrael* ſhould be ſought after, ſuppoſe there ſhould be an hue and cry ſent out after the ſin of my people, yet, ſaith the Lord, it ſhall not be found, why, what hinders the finding of it, or where ſhall it be hid? The next words reſolve the doubt, it ſhall be hid in the pardoning mercies of God: *I the Lord will pardon thoſe whom I reſerve*; The Lord would give ſuch a full and free pardon of ſin, that what ſearch and enquiry ſoever ſhould be made after it, there ſhould not be ſo much as any ſcar or mark, not ſo much as any print or ſtain left, to be a witneſs of their ſin, or a plea for their condemnation. Anſwerable to that (*Rom.* 8. 1.) *There is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.* *Job* ſpeaks as if God were ſo far from hiding his iniquity in a pardon, when it came to be ſearched for, that himſelf ſearched for it, as if he were reſolved not to pardon it. *Wherefore is it that thou enquireſt after mine iniquity, and ſearcheſt after my ſin?*

Both Parts of the Verſe meet in the ſame ſenſe. The word (*Daraſh*) in the latter, being often applyed as the former to a judiciary ſearch; yet ſome diſtinguiſh them ſtrictly thus: the former to ſignifie an enquiry by calling to memory, or the examining of our ſelves, *Thou enquireſt after mine iniquity*, that is, thou askeſt thy ſelf, whether thou haſt not obſerved ſome iniquity in me, Thou doſt (as it were) rub up thy memory, and take an account of what is laid up there concerning me. Memory is the ſtore-houſe or treaſury, the Record or Regiſter of the ſoul. *Books are a memory without us, and a memory is a book within us.* Then the other word ſignifies ſearching by examination of the ſuſpected Party in either of thoſe wayes before explained. The Lord tells the Jewes (whoſe wickedneſs was grown immodeſt, and roſe a ſtep beyond hypocriſie) that he needed not ſearch after their ſins, *in thy skirts is found the blood of the ſouls of poor innocents, I have not found it by ſecret ſearch*, Jer. 2. 34. as noting, that the Lord doth ſomtimes make a ſecret ſearch, and that there are ſome who hide their ſins, ſome who ſit cloſe upon, and cover them, as *Rachel* did the ſtolne Idols, when *Laban* came to ſearch

דרשׁ *Eſt inquirere in peccatorem per teſtes & judiciariam queſtionem.* Pined. *Quærere notat ſcientiam Dei, & denotat animadverſionem. & vindictam,* Diraſh *à* Bakaſh *diſtinguit poteſt, ſi illud in revocatione ad animum, hoc in ſcrutatione occultorum penamus.* Coc.

Jacobs stuff: that there are some who make excuses and apologies for them: to these the Lord comes with a secret search for their iniquity The word in *Jeremy* signifies *digging*; I have not found it by digging: some put their sins under ground; only deep digging can find these out. *Job* enquires of the Lord, why he made such a searching after his iniquities, why he was so curious in looking into every corner, and behind every door, to find out the rubbish of his life, seeing the closestsin is as open to his eye as the Sun at noon-day; and besides, God knew that *Job* had no close sins, no darling beloved sin in his bosom, no sweet morsels of any forbidden fruit under his tongue. He tells the Lord as much in plain terms in the next words, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* As we use to say to a man that makes a busie search after any thing, either in a place or about a person, where there is no probability that it should be found; or when we suppose the party searching cannot yave the least ground of perswasion, that the thing is there, or with him; In such a case (I say) a man will answer, why do ye make such a search? ye know what ye look for is not here, ye know well enough I have it not, ye have some other ends in this. Thus *Job* speaks here, *Lord, why doest thou search for mine iniquity. Thou knowest well enough that I am not wicked, there is certainly somewhat else in the winde: Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.*

Sententia plana est, non est necesse, ut in peccata mea curiosius inquiras, cum deus sit cui nota sunt et perspecta omnia, etiam interiora cordis. Bold,

Take a note or two from these words, *That thou enquirest after mine iniquity* &c.

First, *God knoweth us before he searcheth us.*

Job professeth of himselfas a Judge (Chap.26.16.) *The cause which I know not I searched out*, but God searches out those causes which he knows. God doth not search us that he may know us, or *to inform himself, but to make us know him and our selves.* There are not many, who know themselves at all, there are none who know themselves enough. The Lord searches us, that we may search our selves. There are not many who know God at all, there are none who know God enough; God searches us that we may seek after him. By every affliction the Lord would make us know our selves, and himself better. It is said of *Manasseh*, when he was in the bryars, *That, then Manasseh knew the Lord*, and then (doubtless) he began to know himself. *The same light that brings us to the knowledg of what God is, brings us also to the knowledge of what our selves are.*

Secondly,

Secondly, Observe,

Afflictions are searchers.

Thou searchest for mine iniquity, saith *Job*. *Job* supposed that the Lord came to try him, and to find out the bottome of his heart: when God smites our bodies or our estates, he searcheth our hearts and maketh enquiry in our lives. The Prophet threatens the Jews (*Zeph.*1.12.) That God would come and *search Jerusalem with candles*; that is, as some interpret, he would cause the *Chaldeans* to search for their most hidden treasures, and find them out. Others understand it of God himself, searching *Jerusalem*. But God is not like the Woman in the Parable, who had lost her groat, he needeth no candle-light to find out the lost groat, or to find out the filthiness that is in the most secret corners of the heart. The meaning then is, that God would search *Jerusalem*, that is, the people of *Jerusalem*, as exactly, as if they were searched with a Candle; he would bring forth their secret sins, and all their hidden abominations. This search was made by those terrible and sore judgments brought upon *Jerusalem*. God kindled a fire of affliction, and searched them by the light of that fire. Troubles are as so many Candles lighted up to search our selves by, and they will be as so many fires kindled to consume us with, if we search not our selves. At this time God is searching *England* with candles. The Prophet describing the great sorrows of the Jewes in their Captivity, directs us what to do (*Lam.* 3 40.) *Let us search and try our wayes*. When God is searching us, it is high time for us to search our selves. It is sad, when God is searching for our sins, if we are not searching for them too; and it is more sad, if when God cometh to search for our sins, we be found hiding our sins. These are searching times. God is searching, let us search too; else we may be sure (as *Moses* (Numb.32.23.) tells the people of *Israel*) our sins will find us out. They who endeavour not to find their sins, shall be found by their sins, *Our iniquity will enquire after us, if we enquire not after it*. But what if iniquity enquire after us? What? if iniquity enquire after us, it will find us; and if iniquity find us, trouble will find us, yea, if iniquity find us alone without Christ, Hell and Death will find us. If iniquity find any man, he hath reason enough to say unto it (what *Ahab* said to *Eliah* without reason) *Hast thou found me, O mine enemy*. The best of men have reason to look out what is evill in them, when God brings

Quàm minutatim cognoscam de peccatis populi, & cum eo iniborationes meas accuratissimè ut solent qui adhibitis lucernis perlustrant omnia. Jun.

brings evill upon them, or wraps them up in common evils. They who have no wickedness in them to cast them under condemnation, have yet sin enough in them to make them smart under correction. Though *Job* could say from the testimony of a pure conscience, *Thou knowest I am not wicked*; yet he durst not say, thou knowest I have not sinned. *Job* acknowledged he was sinful, and God knew he was not wicked. In searching after iniquity, he found not hypocrisie, yea he knew he was not an hypocrite before he searched him. So it follows

Verse 7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked, and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.*

Continet versus septimus, id quod præcipuè in hac causa & disputatione spectandum est, sc Jobum non esse improbum. Pined.

This 7. verse containeth one of the chiefest questions of that grand controversie handled in this Book, whether *Job* were a wicked man or no? Satan represented him for such to God; and therefore called that he might be tried: the Lord tryed him upon that challenge, and he was brought to a grievous tryal; *Job* appeals to the Lords own knowledge, and is contented to stand or fall according to his determination, being yet assured, that he stood right in the thoughts of God. *Thou knowest I am not wicked.*

Thou knowest.

עַל רַעְתֶּךָ *Apud scire tuū est. Multo plus dicit per hanc phrasin* apud scire tuum est, *quam si diceret* tu scis. *In scientia tua est, penes notitiam tuam est, non aliunde, sed ex te optimè nosti me non esse improbum.* Drus.

The Hebrew is rendered word for word, thus, *It is upon thy knowledge*, or, *it is upon thy know that I am not wicked.* As if he had said, *Thou hast not this knowledge from without, thou dost not ground thy judgment concerning the state of any man upon what others say of him, upon reports or hear-sayes; no, thy knowledg is from thy self; thou knowest upon thine own knowledge, thine is an internal, an immediate, and so a perfect, an infallible knowledge, and that tells thee of me, I am not wicked.*

That I am not wicked.

He doth not say, Thou knowest that I am not a sinner, or, Thou knowest that I have not sinned. *Job* had no such opinion of himself, and he knew God had no such knowledge of him. There is a great difference between being a sinner, and a wicked man. The best of Saints while they are here upon the earth are sinners; but the worst of Saints even here upon the earth are not wicked; they have a new nature, they are new creatures, regenerate and born

Hæret in regenitis peccatū, improbi tamen dici, nec possunt, nec debent. Mer.

born again by the Word and Spirit, therefore they are not wicked; though much sin be in them, yet no wickedness is in them; and they are denominated from their better part, not wicked from their remaining corruption, but holy from their received renovation, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.*

Again, the word in the originall being in the Verb, we may translate (as many do) *Thou knowest that I have not done wickedly.* But the sense is the same, *for every man is in doing as he is in being*; he that is not wicked in his state cannot act wickedly. So we must understand that of the Apostle *John* (1 Epist. 3. 8.) *He that committeth sin is of the devil.*

כי־לא ארשע

Quod non impiè egerim. Mont.

Thirdly, *To be wicked* is ordinarily opposed to *our being just*; and so, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*, is, *Thou knowest that I am not condemned or cast at thy bar, for a wicked man.* I am not condemned, but justified in thy sight. In which sense the word is used in that prophetick curse against *Judas*, who betrayed Christ (*Psal.* 109. 7.) *When he shall be judged, let him be condemned*: so we render it; the Hebrew is elegantly translated thus, *When he shall be judged let him go out wicked*; that is, let him go out from before the bar and tribunall of his Judges, a condemned man, or, *Let him proceed wicked.* Let that be his title and his honour. *Wicked and just* are judiciary or Court-terms, equivalent with *justified and condemned.*

Exeat improbus.

Improbus et justus verba sunt forensia.

Some joyn these words with the verse going before, *Dost thou search into mine iniquity that thou may'st know whether I am wicked?* As if he had said, *Lord, thou needest not make enquiry about this thing, for as I am not wicked, so thou art not ignorant: Thou hast not afflicted me, because I am wicked, nor hast thou searched me, because thou art ignorant, Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* Hence Observe,

First, *That the Lord knowes the state of every man, and of every thing exactly.*

The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his (2 Tim. 2. 19.) and he knoweth them that are not his: not his by the grace of election and regeneration: for all are his by the right of creation and dominion. Thus he knows all the fowls of the mountains, and the beasts of the field are his (*Psal.* 50. 11.) *David* gives this glory to God in his own case (*Psal.* 139. 1.) *O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me*; God did not search him to know him, but he searched him

and

and knew him. The knowledge of God was not a consequent, but a concomitant of that search; or it is spoken in opposition to man; a man may search his neighbour, and yet not know him. There are depths and turnings in the heart of man, which no man can reach or find out; but God hath a thread which will lead him into all and thorow all the Labyrinths, a Line which will sound all the depths of man. Hence *David* makes a particular of the knowledge of God; God knew him in all that he was, and in all that he did, *Thou knowest my down-lying and my up-rising, and thou art acquainted with all my wayes.* God is the Judge of all men, therefore he knows all men, *Heb.* 4 13. *There is no creature which is not manifest in his sight, all things are naked and open before him, with whom we have to do.* The Apostle by two Metaphors in these words teaches us, that as the out-members and lineaments of the body, together with their beauty or deformity are clearly seen, when the body is naked and unclothed, that as the bowels and intrails of the body, together with their soundnesse or diseases are perfectly discovered, when the body is dissected or cut up by the hand of a skilful Anatomist, even so are we in all we do, and in all we are perfectly known, or as the same Apostle speaks (2 *Cor.* 5. 11.) *manifest unto God*, even manifest with as much clearness to the knowledge of God, as the light is to the eye of man. He knows, 1. Our persons. 2. Our actions. 3. He knoweth the manner of our actions: 4. He knows with what hearts we act. 5. He knoweth not only the means we use, but the ends we propose in every action. 6. He knoweth what we have been as well as what we are. And 7 He knoweth what we will be, as well as what we are or have been; He knoweth what we have done, as well as what we do; and he knoweth what we will do, as well as what we do or have already done. He seeth all creatures in the glass of his own counsels thorow and thorow. His eye hath thorow lights in all parts of the world, and in the hearts of all men in the world.

γυμνὰ καὶ τετραχηλισμένα.

And seeing man cannot be hid from God, it is the vainest attempt for any man to think of hiding himself from God; yet that is not only the attempt, but the hope of many, who while they do what they would not have seen, please themselves with this conceit, that they are not seen in doing it, or that they can secure what they have done from being seen. We learn'd this of our first parents, in whom the first thing that appeared (next

their

their shame) after they had sinned, was the hiding of their sin. Man loveth to draw a curtain between God and himself, to raise up artificial darkness, and to walk in thick clouds (as he vainly hopes) undiscovered.

Again, Doth God know us? then let us labour to know our selves. God knows who are wicked; many are wicked and know it not. It is a woful mistake, when we think our selves to be in a good estate; and God knows us to be in a bad estate! It is a wrong to God and our selves, when God knows us to be in a good estate, and we think our selves to be in a bad Estate, but it is far worse, when we think our estate good, and God knows it to be bad. We should be acquainted with our condition, lest we (like *Laodicea*) flatter our selves into an opinion that we are rich and cloathed, and have need of nothing, when God knows we are poor and naked, and wanting all things.

Secondly, Observe from the elegancy of the Hebrew expression. *It is upon thy knowledge that I am not wicked.*

God knoweth all things in and of himself.

This gives glory to God, and lifteth him up above the creature in the fullness of his knowledge. Men who have the greatest knowledge, and vastest comprehensions of things, yet have not that knowledge in and from themselves, they fetch it in by borrowed helps, and glad they can have it so too. It costs man a great deal of travel and study, to make himself master of a little knowledge (*Job* 12. 12.) *With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes is understanding:* Some indeed get wisdom and understanding, and are owners of a vast stock and treasure of knowledge; but when? but how? When they are old, when they have had long experience, and have studied hard for it, *With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes is understanding:* Thus men get knowledge. But mark what is said of God in the next words (*vers.* 13.) *But with him* (meaning God) *is wisdom and strength, He hath counsel and understanding. With him it is, and he hath it:* The Lord doth not grow more knowing by years, nor doth his understanding mend by the multitude of dayes: though he be the *Ancient of dayes*, yet it is not his antiquity which hath got him this knowledg; his knowledg is in him, and with him, and from himself; he fetches not his knowledge from sence, nor doth he take it up by information; He learns it not by demonstration raised from the things themselves, nor by the collation of

one thing with another. He doth not know this to be so, because that is so, but all things are so, because he knows them. He knows all, 1. Fully, not to halves. 2. Certainly, not probably. 3. Actually, not possibly. 4. At once, not successively; as not one thing by another, so not one thing after another. Such are the eminencies, and transcendencies of the knowledge of God.

The Scripture speaks sometimes as if God derived his knowledge from report, or as if he did not know whether a people were wicked or no, till he had enquired. When the new world was building their *Babel*, the Lord said, *Let us go down to see the City* (Gen. 11. 5.) And when *Sodom* was burning in Lust, the Lord resolved, *I will go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me, and if not, I will know* (Gen. 18. 21.)

In both these places of Scripture God comes down to our capacity, but he comes not down to any place in the world. He needs not come any whether, who is every where. God speaks after the manner of men: but he acts not after the manner of men. God gives us an example what we should do, he doth not work after our example. Lest we should judge before we see, God saith, I will go down and see, before I judge: lest we should censure one another upon fames and common cries without further enquiry, whether it be so or no, therefore the Lord saith, *I will go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry that is come unto me.* God knew *Sodom* was wicked, before he came down, but he came down to make it known, that he knew it.

As those Scriptures seem to import that God knew not how wicked the builders of *Babel* were, or the dwellers in *Sodome*, till he took pains to enquire; So another Scripture imports, that he did not know *Abraham* was a godly man, till he made an experiment of it, by putting him upon that hard piece of obedience, the offering up of his son, *Now I know thou fearest me* (Gen. 22. 12.) as if the Lord had collected his knowledge of what *Abraham* was, from what *Abraham* did. But that testimony of God, *Now I know*, is but now I have made it known, or, now I know that in the fruit, which I knew before in the root; Now I see my fear in thy works, as before I saw it in thy faith. That place (*Deut.* 8. 2.) bears a like sense; where *Moses* bespeaks *Israel* thus, *Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these*

fourty

fourty years in the wilderness to humble thee, and prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his Commandments or no. The Lord needed not fourty years no nor one minutes experience to make up his thoughts concerning that people; he knew what they were at first sight, and what they would prove (even a stubborn, an unbelieving and a back-sliding people) before they were, God proved them, not to know what was in their hearts, but that we might know it: that, what he knew by his internal, immediate inspection, others also might know by external observation. It would not have been believed, that they were so bad, if God had not drawn it out by that fourty years variety of his dispensations towards them. Or *Moses* describes God after the manner of men, who prove things that they may know them, whereas indeed God knows, and then proves them.

Thirdly, Considering how *Job* comes in with this assurance [*Thou knowest that I am not wicked*] to relieve himself in his distress, we may observe,

That it is matter of highest consolation to the Saints, to know and remember that God knows them.

That God knows their hearts and lives, is the joy of their hearts and lives. How rejoycingly doth *David* speak (*Psal.* 139. 1, 2.) *O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me, thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising*, &c. He seems to be as glad that God knew him, as that God would save him. *My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high*, was *Jobs* resort again, when his friends scorned him (*chap.* 16. 19.) There are no mistakes in God; he will give right evidence, as a witness, and a righteous sentence, as a Judge.

Again, That God knows us, assures us,

First, That what we have done shall not be forgotten; *God is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love*, &c. *Heb.* 6. 10. It assures us,

Secondly, That we shall not be mis-interpreted for what we have done. The reason why many men have so ill an opinion of others, is, because they have so little knowledge of them. Ignorance makes as corrupt glosses, as unsound decisions upon persons and actions, as it doth upon texts or questions. Some pervert knowingly and against light, but most pervert ignorantly and for want of light. God knows us perfectly, and he never acts against his knowledge. It assures us,

Thirdly, that we shall be well accepted and rewarded. Though men make ill requitals, and pay in bad, yea in base coyn, yet every man shall receive of God according to what he is, and what his works are (*Gen.* 4. 7.) *If thou dost well, Shalt thou not be accepted?*

Lastly, It is a comfort to us, while we are uncertain about our own estates, to know that God knoweth *us*. God hath a better opinion of some men then they have of themselves. Some do not only think, but judge and conclude themselves wicked, when God knoweth that they are not wicked. *The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his.*

Fourthly, *Thou knowest that* I *am not wicked.* Then observe, *To do wickedly, or to be wicked is inconsistent with grace.*

If *Job* had been a wicked man, he had been a lost man. Sin is not inconsistent with grace, but wickedness is.

But you will say, What is Wickedness? And when is a man so sinful that he is to be numbred among the wicked? To clear that, because *Job* ventures all upon it.

I answer; first, In every wicked man sin reigneth, that is, sin hath not only a being in him, but dominion over him; he yieldeth ready and free obedience to it, as to his *natural Lord*, not a forced and involuntary obedience only, as to a *tyrant*. Our committing of sin gives not the rule to sin: but our submitting to it. As a man may do many good things, and yet grace not reign and rule in his heart, so it is possible for a man to do many evil things, and yet not have sin rule in his heart. A man may lay by the actings of a sin, and yet that be a reigning sin, and a man may fall into the act of sin, and yet that no reigning sin. The reign of sin or of grace are chiefly seen in that professed subjection or resignation of our selves to the dictates and commands of grace or sin. *No man can be at once Gods Son, and sins servant; no nor at once a servant to both.*

Secondly, A wicked man is a customary sinner, he driveth a trade in sin. A godly man (possibly) may commit the same sin again, yet the custom is broken, because he putteth in a plea against sin, and often moveth God for power, not only against, but over it: if he attain not this blessed victory, yet he ceaseth not to complain, and pray, *O wretched man that* I *am,*

who

who ſhall deliver me from this body of death? When ſhall *I* be delivered from this burden and bondage of corruption? When ſhall it once be? O that it might once be! Wicked men are ſo far from pleading againſt, that they uſually plead for their ſins; and labour more to make excuſes and apologies for them, then to get power and victory over them. They inſtead of making preparation to reſiſt the luſts of the fleſh, make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfill the luſts thereof.

Thirdly, A wicked man preſerves in himſelf a purpoſe to ſin, while he ſeems to pray and proteſt againſt his ſin. He is (as *Auguſtine* confeſſed of himſelf before his converſion) afraid God ſhould grant his prayer, while he prayeth that his corruptions may be mortified. He may put up prayers againſt ſin, but he puts up no deſires againſt it. As cuſtom is the rode of our lives, ſo purpoſes are the rode of our hearts. What a mans purpoſes are, ſuch the movings of his heart are (*Iſa.*56. 12.) *To morrow ſhall be as to day, and much more abundant*, ſay they in their beaſtly abuſe of the creatures, we have been drunk to day, and hope to be more to morrow (*Ezek.* 11.21.) *Their heart doth go after the heart of their abominable things*; that is, the inclinations and reſolutions of their hearts go or walk after their abominations. A godly man ſinneth, but he doth not purpoſe to ſin; his purpoſes are not to ſin, holineſs is his way; and as ſin is it ſelf a by-way, ſo it is beſides his way. The honeſt Traveller intends to keep ſtraight on to his journeys end; if he miſs his way at any time, he miſſes his purpoſe. The robber skulks about in by-waies, and comes not into the rode, but to find and ſeize upon his prey. *Peter* denied Chriſt, but did *Peter* purpoſe to deny Chriſt? No, *Peter* purpoſed not to deny Chriſt, yea *Peter* promiſed not to deny Chriſt. *Peter* reſolved that he would die rather then deny Chriſt, and yet he denyed Chriſt; *Peter* did not go out and make a bargain with the Scribes and Pharizees, as *Judas* did, to betray his Maſter. *Peter was betrayed when he denied his Maſter. Peter* was ſuddenly attached with a violent temptation & arreſted with baſe fear. He did not deny Chriſt, becauſe he reſolved to do it, but becauſe he reſolved ſo much not to do it, without due dependance upon Chriſt for power not to do it. A godly man may have ſome deliberations about ſin, yet no reſolutions: He may deliberate upon the acting of ſome ſin, when the occaſion is given, but he doth not deliberate upon the finding of occaſions to provoke him to the acting of ſin. *David* did not

go

go up to his house top to invite an incentive of lust, though he there met with one.

Fourthly, Wickedness carrieth clearness, yea fullness of consent in sin. A wicked man may have many checks at sin from his conscience, but he hath none from his will. And a wicked man may have some motions to good from his conscience, but he hath none from his will. When a wicked man abstains from doing evil, he wills it; and when he doth good, he wills it not. In nature, the act and the consent go both to evil, *I do evil, and I will do it, is the stubborn voice of corrupt nature.* In grace, though the act goes sometimes to evil, yet the consent doth not. *The evil which I would not, that do I, is the mournful voice of grace.* In glory, both act and consent go to good, and neither of them to any evil. *The good which I will, I do, the evil which I would not, I do not, shall be for ever the triumphant voice of glory.* When the Apostle *Paul* (Rom. 7.) bewailed his own bondage under corruption, he yet professed that what ever evil he did, he consented not to do it. And though there may be some kind of consent in the sinning of a godly man, yet it is not such a consent, as in a wicked man: For as a wicked man, though he may sometimes shew his willingness, and give his consent to do good, to hear the Word, to pray, &c. Yet it is not a clear, a full and free consent, the will never comes up heartily in it: so there may be some kind of consent, a negative consent in a godly mans doing evil, he may not (as to that act) resist or deny; as when a question is put to the vote, a man who doth not affirm, may be said to give some consent, when he suspends his voice, and doth not openly oppose. Thus a godly man when a temptation cometh, never gives a direct *yea* of consent, yet sometimes not giving his *no*, there is a kind of consent, a middle act, not a clear or determinate act of consent. Now a wicked man, as he is *taken captive by the devil at his will* (2 Tim. 2. 26.) that is at Satans will, the devil takes him captive when he pleaseth: so also at his own will; He is pleased to be taken captive by the Devil.

Eram gratis malus & malitiæ meæ causa nulla erat, nisi malitia August. *lib. 3. Confess. c. 4.*

Fifthly, Where there is a wickedness in sinning, there is delight in sin. Pure delight in sin is impurest wickedness. To disobey for nought is the most wicked disobedience, as to serve God for nought is the most holy service. What is it which sheweth the eminency of grace? Is it not the joy which the soul finds in the wayes of grace? When we can delight in the law of God, as his

law

law abstracted from ends and fruits. When it is meat and drink to us to do the will of God, though we suffer hunger, and are ready to starve in doing it, here is godliness at the highest: and when any delight in sin as sin, as contrary to the will of God, abstracted from ends and fruits, here is wickedness at the highest. To act in such a degree of sin, is inconsistent with any degree of grace.

Job appeals to the Testimony of God, that he had not sinned in any of these degrees, while he saith, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.*

Observe, Fifthly, *A Godly man may know that he is so, and be confident of it.*

He that saith, God knoweth he is not wicked, knoweth it himself. For though the Lord hath a knowledge of us beyond ours, though he know us better then we know our selves, yet no man can tell the Lord, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*, but he who knows that he is not. The excellency of our condition consists in being godly, the comfort of it consists in knowing that we are godly. When *David* offers himself to the trial (*Psal.* 139. 24.) *Search me, O Lord, and see if there be any way of wickedness in me*; He speaks not as doubting whether he were wicked or no, but as being assured that he was not. As if he had said, There are many weaknesses in me I know, but I know not of any wickedness. He that offers himself to Gods search for his wickedness, gives a strong argument of his own uprightness. The best of the Saints may be at a loss sometimes for their assurances, and not know they are good. They may stand sometimes hovering between Heaven and Earth, yea between heaven and hell, as uncertain to which they shall be accounted. Yet many of the Saints are fully perswaded they are Saints, and set with Christ in Heavenly places, while they are wandring here upon the earth. A godly man may know this two wayes;

First, By the workings of grace in his heart.

Secondly, By the testimony of the Spirit with his heart.

First, By the workings of grace in his heart (1 *Joh.* 2. 3.) *Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments*: and (*Chap.* 3. 14.) *We know that we are passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.* There may be such workings of grace in the heart, as may amount to an evidence of grace. *What our being is, is discernable in our workings.* The word is as clear as light,

light, that our juſtification may have a light or evidence in our ſanctification, though no cauſe or foundation there. Grace is the image of Chriſt ſtamped upon the Soul, and they who reflecting upon their ſouls, ſee the image of Chriſt there, may be ſure that Chriſt is theirs. Chriſt hath given all himſelf to thoſe to whom he hath given this part of himſelf.

Secondly, This may be known by the teſtimony of the Spirit with the heart (2 *Cor.* 5. 5.) *He that hath wrought us for the ſelf ſame thing is God*; God ſets up a frame of holineſs in every believer, He hath wrought us; and how are we aſſured that he hath? *Who alſo hath given us the earneſt of his Spirit.* The graces of the Spirit are a real earneſt of the Spirit, yet they are not alwayes an evidential earneſt; therefore an earneſt is often ſuperadded to our graces. There is a three-fold work of the Spirit.

Firſt, To conveigh and plant grace in the Soul.

Secondly, To act and help us to exerciſe the graces, which are planted there.

Thirdly, To ſhine upon and enlighten thoſe graces, or to give an earneſt of thoſe graces; This laſt work the Spirit fulfils two wayes.

Firſt, By arguments and inferences, which is a mediate work.

Secondly, By preſence and influence, which is an immediate work. This the Apoſtle calls *witneſs-bearing* (1 John 5. 8.) *There are three that bear witneſs in Earth, The Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood.* The Spirit brings in the witneſs of the Water and of the Blood, which is his mediate work; but beſides and above theſe he gives a diſtinct witneſs of his own, which is his immediate work, and is in a way of peculiarity and tranſcendency, called the witneſs of the Spirit. Hence that of the Apoſtle *Paul*, *We have not received the ſpirit of the world, but we have received the Spirit which is of Chriſt, that we may know the things that are freely given us of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 12. The things freely given may be received by us, and yet the receit of them not known to us, therefore we receive the Spirit, that we may know what is given us, and what we have received. The Spirit doth (as it were) put his hand to our receits, and his ſeal alſo, whence he is ſaid, *To ſeal us up to the day of redemption*, Epheſ. 4. 30.

Sixthly, Obſerve,

A godly man dares appeal to God himſelf, that he is not wicked.

He dares ſtand before God to juſtifie his ſincerity, though he dares

dares not stand to justifie himself before God. *Job* had often laid all thoughts of his own righteousness in the dust, but he alwayes stands up for his own uprightness. *God is my witness* (saith the Apostle *Paul*, Rom. 9. 1.) *whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospel of his Son*; I serve God in my spirit, and God knows that I do so, I dare appeal unto him that it is so, *God is my witness*. When Christ put that question, and drove it home upon *Peter* thrice, *Simon, Lovest thou me? Lord* (saith he) *Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love thee* (Joh. 21.) As if he had said, I will not give testimony of my self, thou shalt not have it upon my word, but upon thine own knowledge. It were easie for me to say, *Master, I love thee with all my heart, with all my soul*, but I refer my self to thy own bosome, *Thou knowest I love thee*. So when *Hezekiah* lay (as he thought) upon his death-bed, he turned himself to the wall, desiring God to look upon the integrity of his life, *Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth* (Isa. 38. 3.) I do not go to the world for their good word of me, I rest not in what my Subjects or neighbour Princes say of me, Lord, it is enough for me, that what I have been, and what I am, is laid up safe in the treasury of thy thoughts. This brings strong consolation, when we take not up the testimony of men, nor rest in the good opinion of our brethren, but can have God himself to make *affidavit*, or bear witness with us, and for us. That such a man will say, I am an honest man, that such a man will give his word for me, is cold comfort; but when the soul can say, God will give his word for me, *The Lord knows that I am not wicked*; here's enough to warm our hearts when the love of the world is waxen so cold, and their tongues so frozen with uncharitableness, that they will not speak a good word of us, how much good soever they know by us.

Seventhly, Consider the condition wherein *Job* was, when he spake this, he was upon the rack, and, as it were, under an inquisition, God laid his hand extream hard upon him, yet at that time, even then, he saith, *Lord, thou knowest that I am not wicked*. Hence observe,

A man of an upright heart and good conscience will not be brought to think that God hath ill thoughts of him, how much evil so ever God brings upon him.

The actings of God toward us are often full of changes and turnings, but the thoughts of God never change. A soul may be

afflicted till he is weary of himself, yet he knows God is not weary of him. Whomsoever he hath once made good, he cannot but for ever esteem good; and, all such a mans afflictions, are either to shew how good God hath made him, or to make him better.

Eightly, *Job* was under as bad thoughts of man, as (almost) any man ever was, when he spake thus to God, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* Hence observe,

That all the hard censures and misconstructions of men, cannot beat an upright heart out of this hold, that God loveth him, and hath a good opinion of him.

Let men think what they will of him, and judge him as severely as they please; this moves him not at all to think, that God judges him so too. He can see the love of God thorow all the anger of creatures. He likes not his condition the better, because some men tell him it is good, nor the worse, because any man tells him it is ill, while he finds himself bottomed upon the free grace of God, and cheared with the clearness of his own integrity. *The gates of hell shall not* (much less shall the uncharitableness of men) *prevail against such a man.* Happy is he, who can say unto God, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*, while men are saying, thou art wicked. And how miserable is he, whose heart tells him he is wicked, though men say, surely, thou art good. *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things*, (1 *Joh.* 3. 20) Doth conscience tell you that you are wicked, God can tell you so much more? It is a woful thing for any man to be under the just condemnation of his own heart, though it is more woful to be under the flatteries of his own heart. *It is bad enough to be daubed by others with untempered morter, it is far worse to be a self-dauber*; No man hath cause to rejoyce in what himself, or be troubled at what others say of him, unless God say so too.

Two things are further observable from these words;

First, *There is no medium between a Godly and a wicked man.* Every man is one of these two. Some are called civil honest men; many conceit that these are good men indeed, and not a few, that these are in a middle state between good and evil: But the truth is, there is nothing between good and evil, light and darkness: there is no *medium* of participation between these extreams. *Solomon* (Eccles. 9. 2.) set all men in two orders, *All things come alike unto all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, to the good,*

good, to the clean, and to the unclean, to him that sweareth, and to him that feareth an oath. Note by the way, he doth not put the distinction between him that sweareth, and him that sweareth not, but between him *that sweareth, and him that feareth an oath.* There are many who are not swearers (swearing is deboysery, and so inconsistent with civility) who yet do not fear an oath. It is better to fear to do evil, then not to do evil. This division runs thorow the whole world. Good and evil (in a remiss degree) mingle in the same person, but no mans person is in a middle state between good and evil.

Secondly, *God hath a negative knowledge concerning the state of every man.* This is a transcendent, beyond any knowledge which man hath of man. God doth not only know what is in us, but what is not in us, not only what we are, but what we are not. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* The reason why a negative oath is not admitted among men, is, because no man can swear so in knowledg. None can speak negatively of another, knowingly, but God alone. We may say of a man, there is that in him for which it is meet for us to judge him godly: But it is impossible from any outward evidence to conclude peremptorily, he is not wicked. It is more to say of a man, he is not wicked, then to say, he is godly. *It is easier to know what is, then what is not.* As it is in voting, so in knowing: Negative votes are strongest. To say such a thing shall not pass or be done, imports the greatest power: so negative knowledge is the highest, to say such a thing is not, or such a man did it not, imports a certain knowledg, a knowledg so certain, as is appliable to none, but God himself, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.*

And there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.

נצל In piel. נצל *Spoliavit, diripuit, vel significat furto se eripuit.*

What none? Then were our condition sad indeed? *None*, excludes meer creatures only. Christ can deliver us out of the hand of God. And *Job* believed Christ had delivered him, when he said, *There is none that can deliver.*

The hand of God is the power of God; and to deliver out of his hand, is to fetch out, or free from his power. The word which we translate to deliver, notes delivering either by power or by policy, by strength, or by wit. A prisoner is delivered sometimes by rescue or open violence, sometimes by stealth or secret conveyance, he picks a lock, or breaks a door to deliver himself out of the hand of man. But neither of these wayes can any man deliver

himself, or get deliverance out of the hand of God. There is no difficulty in the interpretation of these words, but there is some difference about the intent of them.

Ne mea quidem integritas, cujus tu mihi testimonium facit ut hac plaga liberer: ut qui nihil facto meo coram te promereri possim, Jun.

First, Some, for *none*, translate *nothing*, and so joyn these words with the former, as an argument of the insufficiency of mans righteousness, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*, yet there is *nothing* (in my righteousness) *that can deliver me out of thine hand.* As *Paul* said (1 Cor. 4.4.) *I know nothing by my self, yet am I not hereby justified.* So *Job* saith, Lord, Thou knowest nothing by me, yet hereby I cannot be delivered.

Secondly, These words may be expounded, as tending to move compassion, and to stir up bowels of pity in God towards *Job*; As if he had said, *Lord, why dost thou deal thus severely with me, when there is none that can deliver me out of thine hand; who can rescue me, while thou laiest thine arrest upon me? Thou mayest keep me under restraint, as long as thou wilt; I cannot be fetcht off, or out, and wilt thou deal thus hardly with me? Wilt thou punish me thus?* Whom we cannot hold long in our hands, we are apt to deal more roughly with, while they are in our hands, and to take our peny-worths out of them, while we have them. And 'tis usual with great Princes speedily to seal the Writ of execution against an eminent offender, when they hear or suspect any potent suiters will move for his pardon, and sollicite his deliverance out of the hand of justice. *Job* seems to speak in allusion to such, *If there were any who could deliver me out of thine hand, or pull me away from thee by strength, or by entreaty, I should wonder the less at thy severity.*

Non est qui clamat Deus optime: stringas gladium, ne strictum exterreas in populum tuum.

God doth sometimes even bespeak the intercession of others, and complains that none come in to deliver a people or a person out of his hand. When he was about to destroy *Sodom*, he tells it unto *Abraham*, probably, for that very end, that *Abraham* might intercede for *Sodom*, and (at least) get *Lot* out of his hand. When God was about to execute his judgments upon *Jerusalem*, *He saw, and there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessour*, none to take him off from destroying that people (Isa. 59. 16.) The Prophet complains in words of the same importance (*chap.* 64. 7.) *There is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.* Friends, seeing a father go out hastily to correct his child, rise presently, or stir up themselves to take hold of the father, or to mediate for the child, Pray spare him for this time,

and

and hold your hand: but saith the Prophet, *There is none that will stir up himself to take hold of God.* He is going out in wrath, and no man puts him in mind of mercy, with that cry of another Prophet, *O spare thy people, and give not thine heritage to reproach!* When *Abraham* was ready to slay *Isaac* upon the altar, when his hand was stretched out to fetch the fatal blow, just then, did the Angel take hold of his sword, and delivered *Isaac* out of his hand. God saith to *Moses* (Exod. 32. 10.) *Let me alone*; God was about to destroy that people, *Moses* would not permit him, he seeks to deliver *Israel* out of the revenging hand of God, by that holy violence of prayer and supplication.

Lastly, Others look upon *Job*, as breathing out a very heroick and magnanimous spirit in th s words. As if he had said, *Lord, Thou knowest, and thou shalt know, that I am not wicked, though none deliver or take me out of thine hand, Thou shalt find me holding mine integrity, as long as I hold my life, I am resolved to honour thee, whatsoever thou dost with me.* And so he refutes the charge of Satan: Satan said, *Touch his flesh and his bone, and he will curse thee to thy face:* No, saith *Job*, though he taketh away my flesh and my bones, yet I will not curse him to his face, no nor speak an ill word of him behind his back. Though I should never be delivered, yet God shall never be blasphemed. Upon the whole observe,

That there is no means on earth can rescue us out of the hand of God.

I kill, and I make alive, I wound, and I *heal*; *neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand*, Deut. 32. 39. Till God discharge us there's no escaping: none can force us out of his hand, whatsoever is in theirs; power cannot, policy cannot, riches cannot: we cannot bribe our selves out of the sight, or beyond the stroke of divine justice. A golden key will not open Gods prison door. *Riches avail not in the day of wrath*; and in some dayes of wrath, prayer it self cannot prevail. Then take heed how ye fall into the hands of God. No wise man will run into his displeasure, from whom there is no deliverance, but at his own pleasure. See more of this point, Chap. 9. 12.

JOB Chap. 10. Verſ. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

Thine hands have made me, and faſhioned me together round about; and yet thou doſt deſtroy me.
Remember, I beſeech thee, that thou haſt made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into duſt again?
Haſt thou not poured me out as milk, and crudled me like cheeſe?
Thou haſt cloathed me with skin and fleſh, and haſt fenced me with bones and ſinews.
Thou haſt granted me life and favour, and thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit.
And theſe things haſt thou hid in thine heart, I know that this is with thee.

AT the third verſe of this Chapter, we find *Job* queſtioning with the Lord, *Is it good for thee that thou ſhouldeſt oppreſs? That thou ſhouldeſt deſpiſe the work of thine hands?* In theſe words he inſiſteth upon, and illuſtrateth that argument, by fitting it to his own condition; As if he had ſaid, *Lord, ſeeing thou wilt not deſpiſe the work of mine hands, why ſhouldeſt thou deſpiſe me? Am not I the work of thy hands? Thine hands have made me, and faſhioned me together round about, and yet thou doſt deſtroy me.* The whole context argues out this point: wherein we may obſerve,

1. His forming or making, ſet down in general at the eighth verſe, *Thine hands have made me, and faſhioned me together round about.*

2. The matter out of which he was formed and made, at the ninth verſe, *Remember, I beſeech thee, that thou haſt made me as the clay.*

3. His forming is drawn out in particulars. Wherein we have,

Firſt, his conception at the tenth verſe, *Haſt not thou poured me out as milk, and crudled me as cheeſe?*

2. The conjunction or ſetting together of his parts, at the 11. verſe, *Thou haſt cloathed me with skin and fleſh, and haſt fenced me with bones and ſinews.*

3. The

3. The quickning of his parts thus joyned and ſet together at the 12. verſe, *Thou haſt granted me life.*

4. The preſervation of his life, in the ſame verſe, *Thou haſt given me life*, and (not only ſo, but) *favour, and thy viſitation doth preſerve my ſpirit.*

5. Laſtly, We have *Jobs* ſtrength of aſſurance, or his aſſertion concerning all this at the 13. verſe, *Theſe things thou haſt hid in thine heart, I know that this is with thee*; as if he had ſaid, *Lord, Thou knoweſt all is truth which I have ſpoken.*

There are three opinions concerning the connection or tie of theſe words with thoſe that went before.

Firſt, Some conceive that *Job* perſiſteth in the ſame matter handled, in the words immediately foregoing, exalting the knowledge of God concerning man upon this ground, becauſe God made man. *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* How did *Job* know that? He muſt needs know what man is, who made man. *Thine hands have made me and faſhioned me together round about*; foraſmuch as I am thy work, a piece of thy framing, ſurely, thou knoweſt what thou haſt framed: thou who hadſt knowledg enough to make me, haſt a perfect knowledge of what thou haſt made me. We may joyn it alſo with the later clauſe, *None can deliver out of thine hand*; Why? *Thine hands have made me and faſhioned me.* Is it poſſible for the work to deliver it ſelf out of the hand of him who wrought it? Is that which is formed too ſtrong for him that formed it, when as the ſame hand which gave it form, gave it ſtrength? *We* find this argument as to the former part (*Pſal.* 94. 9.) where from the work of God in our natural conſtitution, the holy pen-man proves the fullneſs of his knowledge concerning us in every condition; *Underſtand ye brutiſh* (he ſpeaks to men, who acted more like beaſts then men) *He that planted the ear, Shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, Shall he not ſee?* As if he had ſaid, He that made the ear, is all hearing; and he who formed the eye, is all eye, all ſight. The argument holds ſtrong from Gods power in forming man, to his power of knowing man, and to his power of diſpoſing man. That's the firſt way of dependance.

Iam teneo hujus rei cauſam; cum enim manus illius me fecerint, jure ſuo poteſt Deus me deſtruere, Cajet.

Secondly, *Job* may be conceived, as rendring an account of thoſe things about which he had taken the boldneſs to interrogate the Lord, at the third verſe. Here he anſwers his own queſtion; as if he had ſaid, now I ſee well enough why thou mayſt deſpiſe

spise and destroy thy work, *It is thy work*; I will go no further' for a reason to vindicate thee in breaking me to pieces then this, *That thine hands have set me together: Thou hast made me*, and thou mayst unmake me; thou hast rais'd me up, and thou mayst pull me down. So the copulative (*vau*) in the original, which we translate by the adversative, *yet*, is taken for a conjunction causal; and so it is frequently used in Scripture (*Gen.* 30. 20.) *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return*; The sense is, *Dust thou art, therefore to dust thou shalt return* (Exod. 15. 23, 24.) *The waters were bitter, and the people murmured*; that is, *The waters were bitter, therefore the people murmured*; here thus, *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me, therefore thou dost destroy me.* He that builds the house at his own charge, and by his own power, may ruine it at his own pleasure.

Ex sua formatione artificis misericordiam movet & excommemorato pristino beneficio, alia denuò efflagitandam arripit. Pined.

Thirdly, The words may carry the sense of a strong motive to prevail with God, to handle *Job* more gently, or to deal more tenderly with him; why? The Lord had bestowed much care and cost to make and fashion him: therefore he will surely pity, and spare him. There is a natural motion of the heart in every agent, towards the preservation of that which proceedeth from it. Creation is followed with providence. If a speechless and liveless creature could speak and understand, it would argue with it's maker (in *Jobs* case) as *Job* doth, *Dost thou yet destroy me?* *David* strengthens his heart to ask good at the hands of God, because he had spoken good concerning him (2 *Sam.* 7. 27.) *Thou, O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house; therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.* Now, if *David* were not only emboldned to ask, but even assured to receive mercy, because God promised to build him a house; that is, to prosper his estate and family, how much more might *Job* be encouraged to pray for, and expect mercy from the hand of God, because God had already framed and built that natural house, his body? The Prophet *Isaiah* being about to plead with God for new mercies, presents him with a catalogue of his old mercies (*Chap.* 63. 7, 8, 9.) *I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath done unto us, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, & according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses*, &c. Having thus at large told the Lord what he had done,

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the Prophet (in a holy zeal) contends with him about what he was doing, vers. 15. *Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness, and of thy glory; where is thy zeal, and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels, and of thy mercies towards me, Are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us*, &c. As if he had said, That great sea of thy goodness hath sent out abundant streams of good things heretofore, and are all those streams now dried up, and the springs exhausted? What's become of thy zeal and strength and compassions? Are they all spent and gone? Thus *Job* seems to plead here, thine hands have made me, thou hast done thus and thus for me, and wilt thou now destroy me? According to this interpretation the latter clause of the verse is rendred by an interrogation, *Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me, and dost thou yet destroy me?* What; thou my maker destroy me! *Remember, I beseech thee* (so in the next verse) *that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into the dust again?* Thus by a specification of the great outward benefits which he had received from the hand of God, he seems to aggravate his present sorrows, and to solicite future mercies.

Et sic repente præcipitas me. Vulg. *Antitheti beneficiorum amplissimorum, in se à domino collatorum, exaggerat iram quo nunc in se desævit ac afflictiones, quibus exagitatur.* Jun.

Thine hands.

Hands are often ascribed to God, as was shewed, *vers.* 3. Many things are made with the hand; The maker of all things is without hands, and yet he is all hand. Hence all things that were made, are said to be made by the hands of God; not only the forming of man, but the forming of the Heavens and of the Earth, is the work of his hand (*Psal.* 102. 25. *Psal.* 95. 5. (both are put together.) *Isa.* 48. 13.) *Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the Heavens.* Wheresoever the great works of God are exprest, a hand usually is exprest as the instrument working them, yet his hand wrought the least as well as the greatest, a worm of the earth, as well as man upon the earth, or the Angels in Heaven.

The heads of men have run into great variety of opinion, about these hands forming man.

First, Many of the Ancients understand by the hands of God, *The Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, and the holy Spirit of God, who is the Third, Thine hands have made me*, that is, the Son and the holy Spirit, who were assistant to, and of counsel

Ambros. *in Hexam. Hom.* 11. *Basil*, &c.

with the Father at the Creation of man, *And God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness*, Gen. 1. 26.

Others expound hands literally and formally, not as if God had hands (that's below their conceit) but thus, It hath been said of old, that when God at first had formed man, the Son took upon him an outward shape, or the shape of a man; and so (say they) Christ (not made man, but) in the form of man formed man.

Causis secundis veluti quibusdã manibus utitur Deus ad producendas res sublunares. Aquin

Thirdly, the hands of God are all second causes, which God useth toward the production of any effect. All hands work for God, they work for him, while they are set a work against him; and so may be called, *The hands of God*. Mans making since the Creation, is not an immediate work; the Creation of the first man was. Yet it is so much the work of God still, that every man is the work of his hands, as well as the first man. All inferiour causes concurring to the making of man are the hands, by which God maketh man.

Fourthly, The hands of God, are generally taken for the power and wisdom of God. The hand of power acts, what the hand of wisdom doth contrive. As the hand is often put for power, so to put any thing in the hand of another, is to put it into his power. That grant which was made to Satan at the beginning of this book, runs in this strain, *Behold, he* (meaning *Job*) *is in thine hand* (that is, Thou mayest do with him what thou wilt) *only save his life* (Chap. 2. 6.)

The Schoolmen determine the hands of God to be the *understanding and will of God*, which they call, *The executive power of God*; by these he determines what shall be done, and doth what he predetermines. The very decree and purpose of God, is called the hand of God (*Acts* 4. 28.) *Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, Both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand, and thy counsel determined before to be done.* *Gods hand* was the soveraign power of God, over-ruling those evil instruments to fulfil his holy counsels, while they intended only to fulfil their own wicked counsels.

Tu pro tua pote state tuoq; jure Bez.

We may best interpret *Job* in the fourth sense, *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me*, that is, I am made and fashioned by thy power and wisdom, I am a piece of thy forming. None but the only wise, and all-powerful God, could produce such an effect as I am.

Have

Have made me and fashioned me.

Here are two words which some distinguish by referring the one to the body, the other to the soul. We need not be so accurate about these words. But thus much is plainly noted in them, that the Lord was exceeding accurate about this work, the *fashioning of man.* Both words have their special elegancies.

The first, which we translate *made*, signifies more then to *make*, it signifies to make exactly and curiously. It is a word proper to Artificers, who work, or should work with an equal mixture of diligence and knowledg, of pains and skill: Artificers mingle their heads, and their hands in every thing they undertake, and bestow more study then toil upon their works.

עצב *In sua prima significatione denotat, dolore afficere.*

This word is translated only to grieve, vex, or to put one to trouble. The perverse carriage of the people of *Israel* toward the Spirit of God, is expressed by it (*Isa.* 63. 10.) *They rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit.* And *that bread of sorrows*, that is, bread gotten by sorrowful or hard labour is delivered in this term (*Psa.* 127. 2.) See a further explication of the word, *Chap.* 9. *vers.* 27. pag 352.

Panis anxietate magna & labore partus

God is not put to any pain at all in making man, he doth all his works with infinite delight and ease. *Nothing is hard to him who can do all things: Omnipotency never meets with any difficulty.* But God is exprest in making man by a word, signifying solicitousness and painful care, implying, That man is made as those things are, upon which man bestows greatest pains and care. Man doth not look like a piece of work slubbered over slightly, or clapt up in haste. The most wise God, who sheweth his *manifold wisdom* in the work of redemption, shewed much of his wisdom in the work of Creation; He made man (as we speak) in Print.

Deus non se fatigavit in homine condendo; Sed de Deo Scriptura hominis more loquitur, quasi summa cura & anxietate ad eum formandum usus esset Deus, ut nihil ad ejus perfectionem deesset. Marc.

A learned Translator renders, *Thy hands put me to pain, which have made me*; as if *Job* had complained here of the pain which God put him to after he had made him, rather then exalted God for the pains he seemed to have taken, when he made him. But we may better keep to our rendring, *Thine hands have made me, and*

Manus tuæ dolore afficiunt me, quæ fecerunt me. Jun.

Fashioned me.

The *making* of man importeth his being: The *fashioning* of him, the outward formality of his being. Man receives not only his

nature, but his figure from God. The word signifies to trim or
עשה polish, to do a thing curiously and compleatly *Gen.* 1. 31. *God saw*
Est aliquid facere, sed ornatè & politè, rem omnibus modis perfectam efficere. *all that he had made, and behold it was very good.* He saw all with delight and highest content: for he had put all in to a composure of most exquisite comelinesse, and perfect beauty. *A due and proper fashion is the essence of comlinesse, Thine hands have not only made, but fashioned me*, and that not in part only, but as it followeth,

יחד כביב
Alludere videtur ad figuli rotam. Pined.

Together round about.

This is no pleonasm or superfluity of speech; for though when a thing is made and fashioned, it is supposed to be made round about, yet here to shew the exactness of God in making man, *Job* speaks as if God had resolved to have all of his own doing, and would not trust the lest part of this work into the hand of any other, *Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me together round about.* Which words are, say some,

Artifices opus pene absolutum curiosè circumspiciunt, ut si quid oculis ingratum deprehendant, corrigant. Sanct.

First, An allusion to the art of a potter, who formeth and fashioneth earthen vessels, turning them often about and about upon his Wheel. Or it may be an allusion to a Statuary, or to a painter, who having a curious costly piece in hand, goes about it, and views it round on every side: That if any thing suite not his eye, his fancy, or the rule of art, he may correct it.

[a] *Dicit in circuitu, quod corpus videtur anima esse in circuitu, sicut vestimentum vestito, aut sicut domus habitatori.* Aquin.

Secondly, [a] Others conceive that this *round about*, is only a circumlocution of the body, because the body encompasseth the soul round about, as a garment doth the body, or a house the inhabitant.

[b] *Totum dicit ut ad singula corporis membra referatur. Idem est, quod latinus dicit intus & extra, intus & in cute, à capite ad pedes.*

Thirdly, [b] *Together round about*, is (as was touched before) me in every part, or all me. When some took offence at Christs healing a sick man upon the Sabbath day, he answers, *Are ye angry at me because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day?* (John 7. 23.) or that I have made the whole man whole, not leaving any unsound limb about him? There is a like phrase (*Luk.* 11. 40.) which may illustrate this; *Ye fools, Did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also?* That is, Did not he that made man, make him *together round about*; Did not he make whatsoever is man? So *Jobs together round about, is*, as if he had said, *Thou hast made me within and without from head to foot; thou hast made me all that I am; how great, how good, how strong, how beautifull soever I am, I am made by thee. Thou* (as *David* speaks,

Quantus, quantus sum, magna Dei cura & artificio elaboratus sum. Pined.

ὃν ὅλον ἀνθρωπον ὑγιῆ ἐποίησεν.

speaks, (*Psal.* 139. 5.) *hast beset or formed me* (so the Hebrew, *behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.*

צרתני
Formasti me.

Fourthly, By *together round about*, we may understand all without man, which man hath about him. Thou hast made and fashioned, not only my body, but my estate, my honour, my friends, my children (children *round about the Table*, Psal. 128.2.) Thou hast given me all that I have about me; Whatsoever I am, I am made and fashioned by thine hands: So the phrase is used, *Chap.* 19. 9, 10. *He hath stript me of my glory, and taken the Crown from my head, he hath destroyed me on every side*; or, he hath destroyed me round about, that is, All that he hath made round about me, he hath taken away from me; he hath stript me of all he once clothed me with. Mr. *Broughton* translates much to that sense, *Thou hast fashioned and made me in every point*; that is, Look whatsoever I am considerable in, under what notion so ever I may be taken, *Thou hast made me and fashioned me in all.*

Per circuitum omnia etiam illa intelligamus quæ hominem cingunt, se facultates, liberos, familiam universam.

Observe, First,

Then making of man now, is the work of God, as well as the making of the first man was.

Job doth not say, The Lord did once make and fashion man, but *thine hands have made me*: He ascribeth his own making to God, as well as *Adams*. The structure and frame of nature is the work of God, not of Nature: Nature and natural causes are nothing but the order in which God worketh. God turneth or changeth, stops, or sets them forward as he pleaseth. Second causes work purely at the will of God; though means be used by man, yet the effect is Gods. Corn groweth in the field by the hand of God. You will say, What then doth the husbandman? What doth the earth? What do the Sun and Rain? Do not all these work? All these are nothing but the order wherein, and by which the hand of God makes the Corn to grow; for let all those second causes work as hard as they can, yet the Corn grows not, unless God speak the word; His steps, not the husbandmans, drop fatness, It is he, not the Sun or the Rain, which makes the vallies stand thick with Corn, to laugh and sing. As in spirituals, so in naturals, he that planteth, and he that watereth is nothing, but God that giveth the increase. The Psalmist speaks exclusively of man, as to the point of mans making, and he putteth an emphasis upon it, as if man did not take notice enough, if at all,

Natura nihil aliud est quam divinarum operum ordo Bern.

all, of this, that in this man is nothing, *Know ye, that the Lord he is God, it is he that hath made us, and not we our selves.* There may be a great deal of grace acted in acknowledging God to be the author of Nature: yet I conceive the Psalmist speaks there rather of Gods making us in grace then in nature.

Psal. 100. 3.

Secondly, Observe, *Job* recounting what God had done for him, brings in, *Thy hands have made me and fashioned me*, then,

Our making and natural constitution are to be reckoned amongst the great benefits received from God.

Psal. 139. 14. *I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* The making of a man is a wonder: though the frequency of it makes the wonder little observed, yet the wonder is not (in it self) the less. *David*, who had serious and holy thoughts about natural things, confesseth, *I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* A Heathen had three reasons for which he used especially to thank God. One of them was this, because he had made him a man. If men, who have but the light of nature can see so much of God in nature, How much of God should we see in nature, who have the light of grace to see it by!

Thirdly, From the words put together, *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about*, Observe,

The whole fashion and fabrick of man is from God.

From which general take these consectaries.

First, Then do not undervalue the body, it is the work of God, *He hath fashioned it round about.* We always look upon and value our bodies too much, when we are proud of them; but we can never look upon or value our bodies too much, while we are thankful for them; and that we may be so, we ought to view every room of this house of clay, from story to story, from the garret to the cellar, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, that we seeing the wonderful works of God, may have our hearts enlarged in his praises. Some have put ignoble titles upon the body of man, calling it a prison, or a shackle. The body is not a prison, it is a palace; it is not a shackle, it is an organ, a fit instrument for the soul to use and act by. If at any time the body be unuseful to the soul, that proceeds from sinful corruption, not from its natural constitution.

See more of this point before at the third verse of this Chapter. pag. 443.

But the Apostle (*Phil.* 3. 21.) calleth our body, *a vile body*, or the body of our vileness. Mans body is not vile, as God made it (so it is a stately structure) but as sin hath made it. The

τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν.

Apostle

Apostle calls it vile, not absolutely, and in it self, but relatively. The body clothed with mortality is vile, compared with the body, when it shall be clothed with glory, and that glory like the glory of the body of Christ, as is assured us, *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body*; The words carry an allusion to those who changing old and broken vessels, desire to have them wrought in the best, and newest fashion. The body of Christ is the richest piece of Gods work, and this shall be the pattern of ours; as here upon earth the spirits of believers are of the same fashion with Christs (the same mind is in the Saints, which was in Christ, there is but one draft of grace (in the main) upon the Souls of all holy men, and that is a copy of Christs, his being the original) So in heaven, the bodies of all believers shall be of the same fashion with Christs. There shall be but one draft of glory in the main (for degrees do not vary the kind) upon the body of Christ, and the bodies of all his members. In reference to this future change of the body, the body in its present state, is vile.

Secondly, Hence it follows, That as we must not undervalue the frame of mans body in general, as imperfect; so we may not despise any for their special bodily imperfections. It is God who hath made and fashioned them round about. It is said (2 *Sam.* 5. 8.) that the blind and the lame were hated of *Davids* soul. Yet to hate any for defects in the body, is a very great defect in the Soul: and to contemn any for natural blemishes, is a spiritual blemish. How then could *David* hate the blind and the lame, and not sin, or are we to number this among his sins? There are two expositions of those words, upon either of which we may clear the difficulty.

First, That when *David* sent to summon that Fort, the *Jebusites* who were the defendants, trusting in the strength of the place, told *David* in scorn that he must first conquer the blind and the lame. As implying the blind and lame Soldiers, were garrison good enough to deal with his great Army upon the advantage of such a fortress.

Secondly, The blind and the lame, may rather be the Idols and strange Gods which the *Jebusites* worshiped, of whose protection, they were not the less confident, because the Jews counted them but blind and lame. As if they had said, even these gods, which you call blind and lame, see well enough what ye

are

are doing, and will come fast enough, and too fast for your ease, to our aid and succour. These blind and lame gods were justly hated of *Davids* soul, but he had learned better then to hate men, who were made lame or blind by God.

Thirdly, Seeing all men are fashioned round about by the hands of God, then as we must not despise any for their bodily imperfections, so not envy any for their bodily perfections. Some are as much troubled to see another have a better body, or a more beautiful face, as many are (alike sinfully both) to see another have a better purse, or a more plentiful estate then themselves.

Fourthly, *Let not the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou formed me thus?* If thy earthly Tabernacle be not so highly, so strongly built, if the materials of it be not so pure, or not so exactly tempered, if thou hast not so good a constitution, so elegant a composition, if thou art not so adorn'd and polished, as some others are; yet be not discontented, the hands of God have made and fashioned thee round about. It is a great honour to a vessel, that he made it, though he have made it (in this sense) a vessel of dishonour.

Fiftly, If God hath fashioned our bodies, then we must not put them out of fashion. It is dangerous to deface the work of God, to undo that which God hath done, to unmake that which God hath made. How sad is it that any should pull down a building of Gods own setting up, without warrant from God! Self-murder, or the murder of another, is an high affront to God, and should have a severe revenge from man. He that sheds his own blood takes revenge upon himself, *And who so sheddeth mans blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man,* (Gen. 9. 6.) As what God hath joyned by a civil, so by a natural band, Let no man put asunder.

Lastly, If thou art made and fashioned by God, then let God have the use of all thou art. Let God dwell in the house, which he hath set up. Let thy body be imployed for God; he that made it, hath most right to it. Every thing in man shews forth the wisdom and goodness of God towards man, let every thing in man shew forth obedience and submission unto God. This was the ground of *Davids* prayer (*Psal.* 119. 73.) *Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me, give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments*; as if he had said, Lord, I would use this body, this soul,

soul, this all, which thou hast made, for thy glory, therefore give me understanding that I may learn thy will; I would not do the will of another, while I dwell in thy house, and am thy tenant at will. I would not imploy those members which thou hast given me, to fulfil the Law of sin, or the commands of Satan. The Apostle is clear upon this argument in reference to redemption (1 *Cor.* 6. 19.) *Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price; therefore glorifie God with your bodies, and in your spirits, which are Gods*; Now as in the work of Redemption we are of God by grace, so in the work of Creation we are of God by nature. The reason holds in both, glorifie God with your bodies, which are not your own, but Gods. It is usual in letting out of houses to put a clause in the lease, that the house shall not be imployed to such and such uses, but only to such as are expressed in the indenture. Surely the Lord who hath built and furnished these houses, hath taught us how to imploy them, and what trade to exercise in them, even the trade of holiness. Take heed you do not let out any room or corner of a room in this house for sin to trade in, or for the work of iniquity. This is to let out a house of Gods making to the devils using.

Yet thou dost destroy me.

The word signifies to *swallow up*; and to swallow up with greedines, *Psal.* 52. 4. *Thou lovest all devouring* (or swallowing) *words*; words which swallow down thy neighbours credit, and devour his good name, as one morsel. The holy Ghost expresseth our final victory over death, by a word which reacheth this sense (1 *Cor.* 15. 54.) *Death is swallowed up* (or drunk down) *in victory*, death is drunk up at a draught. Christ called his sufferings (by which he got this victory) a cup. The Apostle uses the same word again (2 *Cor.* 5. 4.) *That mortality might be swallowed up of life.* When this mortality shall have put on immortality, death shall be swallowed up in victory, that is, there shall be a compleat victory over death, and not only so, but mortality shall be swallowed up of life. In heaven there shall be no death, nor any thing like death, nothing bearing any the least resemblance of its image, or letter of its superscription, nothing of mortality shall be found or felt there: There mortality shall be swallowed up of life; here *Job* complains that his life was almost swallowed up of mortality. *Yet thou dost destroy, or swallow me up.* As thou hast already swallowed

בלע *Absorbere est morsicatim destruere.* Coc. *Deglutio significat omnimodam exterminationem, rerumque omnium profundissimum exitium.* κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος.

lowed up my estate, so thou seemest resolved to swallow up my very breath. When *Joab* besieged *Abel*, a wise woman out of the City cryed unto him, *Thou seekest to destroy a City in Israel, why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?* 2 Sam. 20. 19. *Job* saw a great Army of afflictions encamping about him: and he seems to cry out to the Lord of those hosts, why seekest thou to destroy thy servant, why wilt thou swallow me, who am the work of thine hands?

Distinctio Hebræorum magis postulat, ut verba præcedentia, simul circumquaq; cum hu jungantur, & absorbisti me. Merc.

Grammarians observe from the exactest reading of the Hebrew, that the former words [*Together round about*] should be joyn'd with these [*Thou dost destroy me*] *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me, and yet thou dost destroy me together round about*; that is, Thou makest an utter end, a total consumption of me.

Licet sensus non multum diversus sit, interrogatio tamen sensum reddit valde acrem, & incitatum. Merc.

Again, these words are read by some with an interrogation, *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me, and dost thou yet destroy me?* The question doth not alter, but quicken the sense, and render it more pressing and pathetical. Wilt thou destroy me thus exactly, whom thou hast made so exactly? The (*yet*) in the Text sounds out an admiration. As when God (*Amos* 4.) had brought many judgments upon *Jerusalem*, and found them still impenitent, he concludes the narrative of every one, with, *Yet have they not returned unto me*; As if he had said, What a wonder is here? So *Job* repeating the favours of God to him, concludes with a *yet thou dost, or dost thou yet destroy me?* As if he had said, What a wonder is here? *How unsearchable are thy judgments, O God, and thy ways past finding out?* Thus he sets what God then did, in opposition to what he had done, that so the consideration of former mercies might provoke him to remove or mitigate present judgments. Dost thou destroy me who hast made me?

Quem diligentissimè fecisti diligentissimè destruis.

Hence observe,

First, *That to mind God of making us, is an argument to stay his hand from breaking us.*

See more of this point, ver 3. p. 445.

It *repented the Lord* (saith *Moses*, Gen. 6. 6.) *that he had made man, and it grieved him at the heart.* This repentance and grief did not arise from his making of man; but from that necessity which his own justice and honour laid upon him to destroy man whom he had made, as it follows in the next words, *And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created.* The words shew the resolution of God, not his propension; it went to his heart

heart to do it. If God repented and grieved (underſtand both by a figure) becauſe he had made man, whom he muſt deſtroy, then it cannot but be a grief to him to deſtroy that which he hath made. It is as eaſie to the power of God to undo, as it is to do: but it is not ſo eaſie to his will to undo, as it is to do.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Afflictions deſtructive to the outward man, may be the lot of the beſt men.*

God never deſtroys that ſpiritual creature, which the hand of his grace hath made and faſhioned: but he doth ſometimes deſtroy the natural creature of thoſe who are ſpiritual.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *A good man will make honourable mention of the goodneſs of God to him, while he is under greateſt evils.*

Job writes the natural hiſtory of Gods power and wiſdom in his conſtitution, while deſtruction was knocking at his doors. Though God will deſtroy what he hath made, yet he ought to be glorified for what he hath made. The praiſe of God for faſhioning us, is never ſo comely, as when he is putting us out of faſhion.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *God doth that ſometimes which is moſt improbable he ſhould do.*

He acts ſtrangely in wayes of mercy, and ſtrangely in ways of judgment. He ſaves thoſe whom we expect he ſhould deſtroy, and he deſtroys thoſe whom we expect he ſhould ſave. *The Kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world would not have believed that the adverſary and the enemy ſhould have entred into the gates of Jeruſalem* (Lam. 4. 12.) and who would have believed that the adverſary and the enemy, ſorrow and deſtruction, ſhould have entred into the gates of *Job?* God comes with ſuch afflictions upon his people now, as make him to be admired by all the world. Chriſt will come with ſuch mercies at the laſt, as will make him to be *glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe* (2 *Theſ.* 1. 10.) Chriſt will exceed, not only our unbelief, but our faith.

In the former verſe *Job* pleaded with God, as his maker, he proceeds ſtill in the ſame argument, and re-inforceth it from a ſpecial intimation of the matter out of which he was made, *clay.*

Verse 9. *Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into dust again?*

Remember, I beseech thee.

זכר *Recordatus est, memor fuit, odoratus fuit, quando de sacrificiis usurpatur. Odoretur omnia munera tua.* Jun. Zachar, *mas ut à memoria qua magis pollet quam mulier, aut quia memoriam & nomen familiæ conservat.* Buxtorf.

Job speaks heartily, his spirit was in a heat, *Remember I beseech thee.* The original word is applied to a sensitive act, as well as to a rational (*Psal.* 20. 3.) *The Lord remember*, or *smell all thy offerings.* Memory is the savour or scent of things preserved in the mind. The Hebrews express man, or a male child, by a word of that root, and they give two reasons of it. Either, first, because man is of a stronger memory then the woman. Or, secondly, because the man-child preserveth the memory of the family, and is a monument of his fathers honour, his name being carried on from generation to generation; in opposition to which, women or females are called *Nashim*, which word implieth *forgetfullness*, because their names and titles are swallowed up in their husbands, and forgotten when they are married.

Memory, or the act of remembring is improperly applied to God. For remembrance is of things past, but to God all things are present. Memory is the store-house wherein we lay up several notions, and keep records of what hath been done, which by an act of the understanding we review and fetch out again. All things are ever open before God. He needs not turn leaves or search Registers, he needs not so much as strain a thought to recall what is past; that which was from the beginning, and shall be to the end, yea, to that which hath no end, eternity, is alwaies before him. God is said to remember, or to forget when he acts like a man, who remembers or forgets; but there is no act either of forgetfulness, or of remembrance in God.

Remembring implieth two things in God.

First, a serious attention to the person and consideration of the thing which he formerly seemed to slight, or lightly to pass by. We also remember by minding and thinking upon what is present, as well as by recalling what is past.

Secondly, To remember, notes a speedy supply of our wants, or actual deliverance out of dangers. God remembers us, when he favours us; he remembers us; when he pities us, he remembers us, when he relieves us, *Who remembred us in our low estate*, Psal. 136. 23. that is, who brought us out of our low estate. *The needy shall not alway be forgotten*

gotten (Pſal. 9. 18.) not alway, no nor at any time, the Lord doth not at all forget any, much leſs ſuch needy ones, as that Scripture intends. The meaning is, they ſhall not alway be undelivered, their eſtate ſhall not lie for ever unconſidered, and their cry unattended to. God will not deal with them, nor ſuffer others to deal with them, as if he had forgotten them. *Hannah* was long under that affliction of barrenneſs, and when the Lord gave her conception, it is ſaid, *He remembred Hannah* (1 Sam. 1. 19.) his thoughts were ever upon her, and upon her petition, but when he granted her petition, then he remembered her indeed. As we then remember God, when we obey his commands: ſo God remembers us then, when he fulfills our requeſts. *Remember, I beſeech thee.*

As it is our duty to remember the Lord, ſo it is our priviledge that we may put him in remembrance.

It is a priviledge, and a very great one, to be a *remembrancer to the king of Heaven.* The Prophet deſcribes ſuch an office (*Iſa.* 62. 6.) *Ye that make mention of the Lord*, or nearer the Hebrew, *Ye that are the Lords remembrancers, keep not ſilence, and give him no reſt.* Great Princes have an officer called their *Remembrancer*, and they need remembrancers. It is at once their honour and their weakneſs to have them. They cannot retain all buſineſſes, and preſerve a record within themſelves of all affairs within their Kingdoms: It is an honour to God that he hath *Remembrancers*, but it is his greater honour that he hath no need of them. Himſelf is the living record of all that hath been done, or is to be done. Knowledge is above memory, and he that knows all things is above Remembrancers. God is willing we ſhould ſpeak to him after the manner of men: but we muſt not conceive of him after the manner of men. We muſt not think he hath forgotten us, though we may beſeech him to remember us.

There are four things which the Saints uſually move the Lord to remember.

Firſt, His own mercies, *Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies*, was *Davids* prayer (*Pſal.* 25. 6.) *Hath God forgotten to be gracious?* was *Davids* queſtion and infirmity (*Pſal* 77. 9.) yet God acts ſometimes, as if he had forgot his nature, or had need to be minded to do what he is. God can no more forget himſelf, then deny himſelf, no more forget to be gracious then ceaſe to be: yet he gives his people leave, yea a charge, to move him to do, what he

he cannot but do, what he is resolved, yea what he is ready to do. Mercy pleaseth God so much, that he often appears displeased on purpose, that we may remember him of his mercy. He delights we should desire, what he delights to grant.

Secondly, The Saints usually mind God of his Covenant. *God is ever mindfull of his Covenant* (Psal. 111. 5.) yet he loves to be minded of it. His royal Title is, The God that keepeth Covenant for ever; yet he loves to be desired not to break it. Thus *Jeremy* begs for the *Jews*, the Covenant-people of God, *Do not abhor us for thy name sake, Do not disgrace the Throne of thy glory, remember, break not thy Covenant with us*, Jer. 14. 21. The Psalmist prays upon the same ground, *Have respect to the Covenant for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty*. As if he had said Lord, Thou hast made a Covenant to preserve and protect thy people, but now they are oppressed; The *dark places*, that is, places full of ignorance and wickedness (which are spiritual darkness) are full of cruelty: Holy knowledge hath no such enemy as ignorance. Or *the dark places are full*, &c. may be thus understood, there is no such obscure corner or by-place in the land, but their malice searcheth it out for the vexation of thy people. We are so far from having liberty to serve thee publickly in the light, that we feel the cruelty of bloody minded men, though we do it secretly or in the dark. Now Lord, it is time for thee to remember thy Covenant.

Thirdly, The Saints use to put God in remembrance of the rage and blasphemies of his and their enemies. Thus the Church of the Jews cries unto the Lord (*Psal.* 137. 7.) *Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem, who said, raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof*. When a man is wrong'd who intends revenge, he will say to the party wronging him, well, *Remember this*, or, I *shall remember you for this*. Revengeful men have strong memories: so hath the God to whom vengeance belongeth. He will certainly remember the sinful, revengeful cry of *Edom* against *Jerusalem*, though the sins of *Jerusalem* did cry to him for vengeance. The Psalmist is as earnest in another place, urging the Lord to remember for his own interest, as here for the interest of his *Sion*, Psal. 74. 18. *Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy Name*. As if he had said, Pray, Lord, take a note of this, make a *memorandum* of this, *That the enemy hath reproached thy Name:* God will

will remember it, if any of his servants are reproached, much more when himself is.

Fourthly, The Saints remember God of their own frailty, and that two-fold. First, Natural. Secondly, Spiritual. *Remember how short my time is, wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? Psal.* 89.47. Man is a frail short-liv'd creature, and it is some comfort to him, that God knows he is so. That which *Job* puts the Lord in remembrance of, is his natural frailty; some understand it also of his spiritual, *Remember, I beseech thee,*

That thou hast made me as the clay.

ὅτι πηλόν μὲ ἔπλασας, Sept. חמר

The LXX reads it, *Thou hast made me clay.* The word signifies cement or morter, which are mixt of earth and water. Thou hast made me as tempered clay. When the original of man is described, it is said, *The Lord formed man dust out of the ground*, or, *of the dust of the ground*, *Gen.* 2.7. here *Job* saith, *Thou hast made me as the clay*, or, *Thou hast made me of the clay*; the sense is near the same, whether we take *clay* for the matter out of which man was made, or for the similitude according to which man was made. *Job* speaks of himself with respect to creation: for, according to the ordinary course of generation, man is not made of clay. The first man was made of clay, and of him all men are. We derive our pedigree from the dirt, and are a kin to clay. *Job* might say, and so may any man, *Thou hast made me of the clay.* However *Job* was, and *man now is made as the clay*; that is, frail, brittle and weak. *We* are composed of materials, which will quickly crack and break. When the holy Ghost would describe how easily Christ can shatter to pieces all the opposites of his Kingdom, it is said, *He shall dash them in pieces like a potters vessel*: A potters vessel will not bear blows, especially not the blows of such an instrument, as is there spoken of, *an Iron rod*: *He shall break them with a rod of Iron* (Psal. 2.9.) we may break a potters vessel with a little wand, or a weak reed, how then should it endure the weight and hardness of an Iron rod? The Spirit of God seems to delight in this allusion, and therefore takes it up often, Read, *Isa.* 45.9. *Isa.* 64.8. *Rom.* 9.21. *We* have the state of the Jews, described under this notion (*Jer.* 18.4.) The Lord bids *Jeremy* go down to the Potters house, he obeys, and found the potter working a work on the wheel, *And the Vessel that he made of clay, was marred in the hand of the potter, so he made it again another*

Propriè significat cementum, vel terram aqua mixtam.

In memoriam revoca, ut me è luto primùm, i.e primum hominem unde orti cæteri formarentur figuli more. Merc.

ther vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then, the Word of the Lord came to him, saying, Cannot I do to you as this potter? saith the Lord, Behold, as the clay is in the hand of the potter, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel. I can form you, and I can break you, I can put you into what condition I please, and ye ought not to be displeased at it. A potters vessel is an embleme of the strongest Kingdoms, How much more of the strongest men?

That we are made of clay, intimates three things, at all which *Job* seemeth to aim, when he saith, *Thou hast made me as the clay.*

First, The excellency of mans frame. He is not thrust together like a rude lump or mass of earth, but *curiously wrought* (Psal. 139. 15.) To make a vessel of clay is an Artificial work, not a natural: It requireth much pains, but more skill. Whence *Job* argueth, *Thou hast made me as the clay*; Thou hast shewed thy heavenly wisdom in shaping and contriving me, as a vessel of honour for thy use, *And wilt thou bring me into dust again?* The remembrance of that love and care which God hath laid out upon us in our constitution, is an argument moving him to pity and compassion, as was shewed at the third verse.

Secondly, That God hath made us of clay, shews our utter inability to contend with God, and to stand against his stroaks: It is, as if *Job* had said, *Lord, Surely thou forgettest of what mettal I am made, thou thinkest I am made of a hard rock, or of invincible Adamant, that I am compounded of Iron, and other the strongest materials; Alas, Lord, there is no such matter, I am made but as thy clay; A great deal of power and wisdom appeared in making me, but a little power will serve to ruine me; I am no sooner toucht but crackt. Why then dost thou plant all thy Ordnance, and discharge so many volleys of shot against me? Lord, What am I? Am I a wall of brass, or a bulwark of stone? Thou knowest I am but a wall of clay, a paper wall, a potters vessel, a little moistned earth. Will any man prepare Cannon to batter a Cottage, or a beetle to kill a fly? Thy providence needs not make such provision against me, or handle me so roughly: that which is weak calls for tender usage, and that which is weak may last long, if tenderly used; a glass with care will continue many ages. Deal gently with thy servant, Remember, I beseech thee, thou hast made me as the clay.*

Thirdly, *That we are made as the clay*, shews our easiness to be overcome

overcome by temptation, and our obnoxiousness to sin. Sin is (in its kind) as spiritual, as grace is, yet our sinful corruption is figuratively called, *the flesh*. One reason (I conceive) of which may be this, because flesh, taken properly, is an occasion of sin. As the sensitive part is a servant, so a snare to the rational, much more to the spiritual. The flesh is at once the organ, and the burthen of the spirit. The Apostle calling Saints to run the race of holiness with patience, gives a very sutable advice, *Let us lay aside every weight*, that is, all carnal cumber; he that would shew himself light of foot, will not take a burden upon his back, he casts off his very garments; to which the next words of the Apostle seem to allude, *Cast off every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us*: So a garment doth, especially a long garment, which in running daggles and folds about our heels. The reason why our sinfull corruption is compared to such a garment, is, because it is so much assisted by this body of clay, the flesh, which is as a long garment to the Soul, hanging about it, and besetting it, on every side.

ἐυπεριστατον, *ad circumagendum proclive: Metaphora ducta à lacinios is & talaribus vestibus, quæ currentibus in stadio non sunt aptæ.*

From which sense *Job* seems thus to move the Lord, *Suppose I have sinned* (he had said, ver. 7.) *Thou knowest I am not wicked, but suppose* I *have sinned*) *and have had my failings, yet, Lord, Remember thou hast made me as the clay, I am not a pure spirit, as Angels are, I have a body of earth about me, which clogs and hinders me in every duty, which many ways endangers me unto every sin.* God himself takes up this as an argument to spare sinful man (*Psal.* 78. 39) When the people of *Israel* rebelled against him, *He many a time turned his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.* What staid him? The next words give a reason; *for he remembred that they were but flesh*; that is, weak and very subject unto sin. This argument prevails again (*Psal.* 103. 14.) *Like as a father spareth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him*; *Why? For he knoweth their frame, he remembreth that they are dust.* As if the very matter out of which man was first made, though without sin, were some disadvantage to him in the resisting of sin. It was a disadvantage before man had any sin in him, how much more is it now, when most men have nothing at all in them but sin, and the best have very much. *That which is born of the flesh* (saith Christ, *Joh.* 3. 6.) *is flesh.* His meaning is, corrupt nature can produce none but corrupt acts. It is a truth also, that our *pure nature*, because it was constituted (as of other parts, so)

of flesh (the soul like a sparkling diamond, being set in clay) was thereby rendred more prone to fleshly or sinful acts. *Natural flesh (in its best state), is more apt to bring forth spiritual flesh (namely sin) then a spirit is.* And that's a reason among others, which some give, why God was so irreconcileably angry with the Angels which fell, why he did never so much as mention them in a way of mercy, or discovered a thought of them for good since their fall, (I say) one reason given is this, *Because God could not remember that Angels were made as the clay, or formed out of the dust*; They were created spirits, pure spirits, they had no clogs of flesh and bloud about them, no fogs, no mists vapouring up from a sensitive part to cloud their intellectual. They had the more power to continue pure, because they were free from any earthly and elementary mixtures. Their sin was a compound of more evils, because their nature was so simple. Angels having no temper without them, no flesh about them, turned themselves away from God, meerly upon the freedom of their own wills. As every good action is by so much the better, by how much it hath a freer concurrence of our wills: so is every evil action so much the worse. The sin we commit is the greater, by how much we have had the less provocation to commit it. The sin of our first parents in eating of the forbidden fruit, was aggravated in it self, because God gave them such plenty and variety of other fruits to eat: but it was lessened in comparison of the Angels sin, because they had more provocations to sin, then the Angels had. The bait of the temptation against our first parents, was laid in their constitution, which being corporal and earthly, must needs be delighted with earthly objects. *The forbidden fruit was pleasant to the eye*, there the flesh took it, *And it was pleasant to the taste*, there the flesh took it again. These provocations man had over and besides that of the Angels, a hope or a desire to mend his condition, and to become like unto God. A body of earth hath a suitableness to all earthly allurements. Every like hath a natural tendancy and motion towards its like. This moves the Lord to pity sinful man, though man must not hence plead impunity for sin. The measure and degrees of sin upon such actings are abated, but the acts do not therefore put off the nature of sin. *A sinner in dust and clay cannot be excused, yet is not so much polluted, and more to be pitied then a sinning spirit.* And that's a third notion in which we may expound *Job*, beseeching

Angeli idcirco irremissibilitèr peccaverunt, quia tanto robustius stare poterant quanto eos carnis commixtio non tenebat. Greg. *Moral. in loc.*

ing to God to *remember, that he hath made him as the clay.*

I might write many things in this clay out of which man was made; but I have met with other paſſages already of the ſame ſubject, eſpecially in the fourth Chapter, verſ. 19. in thoſe words, *Whoſe foundation is in the duſt*, which Text being near of the ſame importance and interpretation with this in hand, I ſhall rather refer the Reader thither, then inſiſt upon the ſame deductions and inferences a ſecond time. Take only this in general. Our reflection upon the matter out of which we are extracted, ſhould leſſon us to low and modeſt thoughts of our ſelves: for what is lower then the earth. We ſay, *He that lieth upon the earth hath not whence to fall*; It is as true, *He that riſeth out of the earth, hath nothing in himſelf whence he ſhould be lifted up.*

Materia ex qua orti ſumus nobis ad modeſtiam magiſtra eſſe debet quid enim luto ſive argilla vilius? Sanct.

Remember that thou haſt made me as the clay, and

Wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?

To be brought to the duſt, is firſt a circumlocution or deſcription of death, *Pſal.* 30. 9. *Shall the duſt praiſe thee, ſhall it declare thy truth?* That is, ſhall I praiſe thee when I am among the dead? *What profit is there in my bloud, when I go down to the pit?* Not that profit ſure, I cannot bring thee in the tribute of praiſe, when my life's gone out.

Secondly, To be brought to the duſt, is a deſcription of any low and poor condition, *Pſal.* 22. 29. *All they that be fat upon the earth* (that is, the great and mighty) *ſhall eat and worſhip, All they that go down to the duſt* (that is, the mean and baſe) *ſhall bow before him.* As if he had ſaid, rich and poor, high and low, the King and the begger, have a like need of ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt, and muſt ſubmit unto him, that they may be ſaved, for as it there follows, *None can keep alive his own ſoul.* The captivity of the Jews in *Babylon* is expreſſed under thoſe notions of *death, and of dwelling in the duſt*, Iſa. 26. 19. To ſhew how low they were brought; even ſo low, that no power but his, who can raiſe the dead, could work their deliverance.

Job ſaw himſelf brought to the duſt of a low condition, of poverty and of diſgrace, and he feared he ſhould be brought to the duſt of death, and of the grave. That's the meaning of this expoſtulating querie, *And wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?* He was not at all brought out of the duſt of his affliction, and therefore he could not ſay of that, *Wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?*

The words are read three ways.

1. 2. 3. } As an { Assertion. Interrogation. Admiration,

First, Many Interpreters give them as a plain assertion, *Remember, that thou hast made me as the clay, and thou wilt bring me into the dust again.*

Secondly, Others read them (as we) with an interrogation, *Remember, that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into the dust again?*

Quoad naturâ vilissimus sum, quoad judicium tuum morti addictus, ut in pulverem revertar, utrumq; debet te commovere, ut parcas mihi in vita. Coc.

Particula pro sic sumenda est, & futurum potentiæ est, decentiam vel debitum, vel jus, vel potestatem denotans, q. d. sicut me tanquâ cementum compegisti, eadem potestate cum volueris in terram reduces nulla mihi illata injuria, Bol.

Thirdly, Some highten them into an admiration, *Thou hast made me as the clay, and (what) wilt thou now bring me into the dust again!* What a wonder is this? Could I have expected such a sudden change as this!

Take the words as a direct assertion, *Thou wilt bring me into the dust again.* So they may have reference to the decree of God concerning man, as those before had to the Creation of man. As if he had said, *By creation and natural constitution, I am frail and weak, made of the clay, by thy purpose and decree I am appointed unto death, Thou wilt bring me into the dust again, therefore spare me for the short time I have to live.*

Some change the conjunction [*And*] into the adverb of likeness, *so*, to note a right, power, or priviledge, and the text runs in this form, *Remember, that as thou hast made me of, or as the clay, so thou mayst* (it is thy priviledge, none can contradict thee in it, and thou doest me no wrong in it, thou mayst) *as thou hast purposed, bring me to the dust again.* Though it be common and natural to all Creatures mixt of Elements, to be resolved and turned back into that out of which they were made, that is, to die; yet to man it is more then natural; there is a decree upon it, besides the naturality of it: *Man dieth by a statute-law of heaven.* To die is a penalty inflicted upon man for Sin, for he had not been under a necessity of dying, if he had not sinned. And therefore though God formed man (as the holy story informs us (*Gen.* 2. 7.) out of the dust of the earth, yet so long as man stood, he never said to him, *To dust thou shalt return*; God only put a supposition, that in case man did fall, he should surely die. But when man had fallen by sin, then he hears what he was, and what he must be, *For dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return* (Gen. 3. 19.) As if God had thus bespoken sinful man. *Thy body was framed out of dust,*

and

and now I charge this burden upon thee, thou ſhalt return to the duſt again.

It is a Queſtion (and I ſhall touch upon it.) Whether death were natural to man or no? Whether man were made mortal, or whether he made himſelf mortal? Some affirm, That death was natural, not accidental, or occaſional to man-kind. They argue for this opinion.

Firſt, thus, *Adam* died not the death of the body, or a natural death, when he had ſinned, therefore the death of the body was not inflicted for ſin upon his perſon, and his poſterity, but was ſeated in, or a conſequent of his nature.

I anſwer, Though *Adam* died not preſently a natural death, yet he was preſently made ſubject or liable unto death; the ſentence was paſt upon him, though the ſentence was not executed upon him. A malefactor who is caſt at the barre, is a dead man in law, though he be reprieved from the preſent ſtroke of death.

Again, Though death it ſelf did not inſtantly ſeize upon him, yet the ſymptoms of death, and tokens of mortality did. Fear and ſhame, pains, and diſtempers, ſweat and wearineſs quickly ſhewed themſelves as ſo many harbingers or forerunners of his approaching diſſolution: we ſee and feel death in theſe, before we ſee or feel death it ſelf. Theſe bid us prepare our bodies for the grave, and our ſouls for heaven.

Secondly, Others reaſon thus, Chriſt hath delivered his people, the Elect, from all that puniſhment, which the ſin of *Adam* did contract and deſerve; but Chriſt hath not delivered his Elect, his own people, from turning to the duſt. Godly men die as well as the ungodly, believers as well as infidels, therefore (ſay they) the death of the body was not procured by ſin.

I anſwer, Whatſoever is an evil in death, Chriſt hath delivered his people from; he hath taken away all that from death, which is puniſhment or annoyance, though death be not taken away. Chriſt hath freed us from the effects of ſin, as he hath freed us from ſin it ſelf, that is, from their prevalence and dominion over us, not from their preſence or being in and upon us. Hence the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 15.) triumpheth over death, *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory?* As if he had ſaid, Death once had a power over man to ſting him to death, death once had a victorious power, and would have been the great conqueror

conquerour, riding in triumph over all the poſterity of *Adam:* but now death hath neither ſting nor ſword to uſe againſt believers, it hath nothing of victory over the Saints. It is now but a ſleep, a ſleep in Chriſt, a reſt from labour, a putting off the rags, the worn rags of mortality, that we may be dreſs'd in the robes of glory. The evil of death is removed, and that which remains of death (the ſeparation of the ſoul and body) proves the greateſt good to both, it being but a preparatory to their everlaſting union.

Omne principiatum ſequitur naturam principiorum.

Thirdly, It is argued, That death and corruption were natural to man, becauſe the matter out of which man was made, was dying and corruptible; for that which is made, muſt follow the nature of that principle out of which it is made. The effect cannot be (ſay they) more noble then the cauſe, nor the ſubject conſtituted, more durable then that which goes into its conſtitution.

To clear up an anſwer to this, we muſt diſtinguiſh of a threefold immortality.

1. A primitive, ſimple, independent, eſſential immortality; this is proper and peculiar to God, in which ſenſe the Apoſtle affirmeth, *He only hath immortality* (1 Tim. 6. 16.)

2 There is a derivative, dependant, eſſential immortality. Some ſubſtances have no ſeed of corruptibillity, nor of death in them. Being either ſeparate from all matter, which is the ſeat and root of corruption, as the Angels, or united to matter, yet ſo as not being produced from it, or having any affinity with it, ſuch are the ſouls of men. Whole man in his creation was not immortal either of theſe wayes, a part of man was, but man was not created immortal: Man was of a middle ſtate and condition, neither altogether ſo mortal, nor altogether immortal, but capable of either.

μέσος ἦν ἀνθρώπου τῶν δύο ἐγένετο ἢ θνητὸς ὅλος ἢ ἀθάνατος δίκαιος ἢ ἑκάτερος Græc Int.

3. There is an immortality by the power or gift, by the mercy or juſtice of God. The power and juſtice of God ſhall give an immortality to the bodies of the damned in hell, they ſhall ever live a dying life, who were dead all the while they lived. They who have ſlighted the mercy of God, ſhall be upheld by his power, to endure his juſtice to all eternity; wicked men would have ſinned with delight for ever upon the earth, if they could have lived for ever upon the earth, and they ſhall live for ever with pain in hell to ſuffer for their ſin.

The power, goodneſs and mercy of God, ſhall much more

give

give immortality to the bodies of the Saints in glory; they who have had a will to delight in obeying God that short time they lived on earth, shall have a power to live for ever in delight, praising God in heaven.

The body of man in the state of innocency had an immortality, by the gift of God; yet with condition, that he did submit to that rule which God gave him to live by. *Do this and live, was the law of Adams life. Adam* had not an impossibility to die, but a possibility not to die; this was the state of immortality in the state of innocency. Man had not fallen into the grave, if he had not fallen into transgression. His life was made as long as his obedience; if he had not turned from God, he had not turned to the earth. Death was convaied in by sin; and our possibility not to die, was not only lost, but changed into a necessity of dying. So then, man is brought to dust, not because his nature was subject to corruption, but because sin hath corrupted his nature. When he abused the liberty of his will, he was subjected to this necessity against his will. By an irreversible ordinance of heaven, *It is appointed unto men once to die*, Heb. 9. 27. *Job* speaks, to that point of Gods law concerning man, *Thou hast made me as the clay, and thou wilt bring me into the dust again.*

Adamus habuit potentiam non moriendi, non impotentiam moriendi.

Adamus peccans non solum potuit mori, sed non potuit non mori.

Quicunque dicit Adamum primum hominem mortalem factum, ita ut sive peccaret, sive non peccaret, moreretur in corpore hoc est, de corpore exiret non peccati merito, sed necessitate naturæ; Anathema sit, Concil. Melivit, Can.

Thus the words are taken as an assertion of the power and priviledge of God, to unmake and pull down man, whom he had made and set up.

If we read the words by way of intorregation or admiration: so *Job* seems to intend them as an allay to mittigate the present severity of the Lords proceeding with him, *Thou hast made me of the clay, but a while ago, and wilt thou bring me into the dust again? O spare me a little before I go hence, and shall be seen no more:* It will not be long before there must be an end of me, O let me have a more comfortable being and breathing, while I am here.

When Satan provoked the Lord against *Jerusalem*, to destroy it, the Lord answered (*Zech.* 3.2.) *Is not this a brand pluckt out of the fire?* As if he had said unto Satan, Art thou moving me to throw this people into the fire of affliction, out of which they were so lately snatcht? *Jerusalem* was in the fire but a while ago, and shall I cast it in again? *Job* pleads in the same form, though not in the same matter, I was clay but the other day, and Lord, shall I to dust again to day? Let me see some quiet days, before I see the end of my days. Gild over this clay of mine with the

shinins,

shinings of thy face upon me, before thou rendereſt me duſt again.

I have more then once had occaſion to touch this argumen, and ſhall therefore paſs it here.

Job having thus ſet forth his natural conſtitution, in the matter of it, as he was made of clay, goeth on to deſcribe himſelf more diſtinctly; firſt, in his conception of his whole body; ſecondly, in the formation and delineation of his parts.

Verſe 10. *Haſt thou not poured me out as milk, and crudled me like cheeſe?*

Lacti ſimile initio emen, ſo ſtea admirabili Dei opere non ſecus ac caseus concreſcit, & conſolidatur, ut membra paulatim conformari incipiant.

קפא *Notat rei liquidæ concretionem coagulationem vel condenſationem.*

Under the modeſt ſhadow of this verſe, that great natural myſtery of mans generation and conception is contained. The former word ſignifies not only the pouring forth of Liquids, but the melting and diſſolving of the hardeſt mettals, Iron, Braſs, &c. that they may be fitted to run or be powred forth, *Ezek.* 22. 21, 22. And as this ſignifies the ſoftning and melting of that which is hard, ſo the next word (which we tranſlate *crudled*) ſignifies the hardening or thickening of that which is ſoft and fluid. *Moſes* uſeth it in deſcribing the miraculous dividing of the red-ſea, *Exod.* 15. 8. *The floods ſtood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the Sea.* The Prophet *Zephany* uſeth it for the ſetledneſs and reſolvedneſs of a people in ſin (*Chap.* 1. 12.) *The Lord* (ſaith he) *will puniſh the men that are ſetled* (we put in the margin *crudled* or *thickned*) *on their lees.* I might from theſe proprieties of the original words, illuſtrate that ſecret of mans original. But foraſmuch as the ſpirit of God hath drawn a curtain, and caſt a vail of metaphors over it, therefore I intend not to open or diſcover it. Ancient Philoſophers have ſpoken of theſe natural operations in a like language, and under theſe ſimilitudes: I ſhall only ſay in general, that theſe two expreſſions; First, *Thou haſt poured me out as milk*; Secondly, *And crudled me like cheeſe*, are appliable to that ſpecial contribution, which God hath charged upon each parent, towards that great work, the continuation of their own kind, and the raiſing up of a poſterity in their place, to ſerve himſelf and their generation. Learn hence,

διον ἐν τῇ τῦ γάλακτος πήξει τὸ μὲν ὑγρὸν μα τὸ γάλα ἐστιν, &c. Ariſt. de gen. Animal. c. 20.

Miſeret atq; etiam pudet, animantem quā ſit frivola animantium ſuperbiſſimorum origo. Plin. l. 7. c. 7.

First, *That man hath reaſon to be humbled at the meanneſs and manner of his original.*

What hath he to be proud of in the world, who that he might

be

be prepared for his coming into the world, was poured out as milk, and crudled as cheese. Let not man be high minded, whose beginning was so low and homely.

Learn secondly, *Our natural conception is from God.*

Men (in a strict sense) are called, *The fathers of our flesh, and God the father of our spirits* (Heb. 12. 9.) Yet God hath the chief title to the father-hood of our flesh, as well as the sole title to the fatherhood of our spirits, *Thou hast poured me out as milk, and thou hast crudled me like cheese*; here is no mention of his father, none of his mother, but as if the Lord had brought all by an immediate power, he ascribes the whole effect to him. *Thou hast poured me out as milk, &c. We are also his off-spring*, as the Apostle tells the *Athenians* out of their own Poets, *Acts* 17. 28.

Nihil degenitoribus aut seminibus nascitur, si ea non operetur Deus. August. *in Psal.* 118.

Thirdly, This gives caution to all whom the Lord hath called, or shall call to the state of marriage, to be holy in that estate. *Marriage is honourable* (Heb. 13. 4.) *and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*; no wonder if God have a respectfull eye to the undefiled in that relation, and a revengefull eye upon the defilers of it; seeing as his own authority instituted it, so his own power acts so eminently in it. Our conception, our formation, our birth and production are all ascribed to, yea assumed by God himself. Of which second act the next verse gives us a noble and an elegant proof.

Vers. 11. *Thou hast cloathed me with skin and flesh, and fenced me with bones and sinews.*

Job proceeds like a great Philosopher about the production of man. For when by that former work of nature, the matter is poured out and crudled. God by nature makes a further progress, and prepares for another work, the forming and fashioning of that unshapen lump into the parts and lineaments of an organical body. Some Naturalists undertake to tell us exactly what is wrought in the first seven dayes, and what the next, when the brain, heart and liver are formed, and when the flesh, the bones and sinews. The ancient and learned Physitians have distinguished this whole work of God in perfecting mankinde into four periods. The first is, while the matter or principles out of which man is made being mingled together, retain their own form. The second is, when those principles are grossed into a rude fleshy masse. These two periods *Job* hath taught us long

Semen in utero mulieris primis septem diebus conglobatur, coagulatur, figit ad sapiendam figuram idoneum. Gel.

Cal l. 7. de sem. ex doctrina Hippocratis.

before *Galen* and *Hippocrates* in the former verſe, under thoſe notions of *pouring out as milk, and crudling as cheeſe.* The third period is, when a repreſentation is made of thoſe principal parts, the brain, the heart, and the liver, together with the threeds, and (as ſome allude) the warp of mans conſtitution, or as others, the lines and ſhadowes of a man, ſuch as a skilful artiſan makes with a ruder pencil, when he is about to draw a curious picture. The fourth period is, when both the ſimilar and organical parts, are compleated and alſo beautified with proper and lively colours. Theſe two later periods are deſcribed by *Job* in this verſe, and in the beginning of the next.

Thou haſt clothed me with skin and fleſh.

עור *pellis a* ערה *Nudavit.*

The original word for *skin*, comes from a root ſignifying *naked.* We commonly ſay he is naked, who hath nothing upon him, but his skin. And *Job* who here ſaith, *Thou haſt clothed me with skin*, ſaid, *Chap.* 1. 20. *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return thither:* That is, with nothing but my skin. He that wears only skin and fleſh hath no artificial clothing, but he hath a natural clothing. We are dreſt in garments taken out of the Wardrobe of God and nature before the world puts a rag upon us. Thus man is born naked, yet clothed, unarmed, yet fenced.

Thou haſt clothed me with skin and fleſh, &c.

Pellis ita dicta quod externas injurias tegendo repellat. Druſ.

Which ſome interpret in reference to the ſoul, which is covered over and encloſed with the skin and fleſh.

Ulterius progreditur in formatione fœtus, nam poſt conſolidatum ſemen & formata jam membra, accedunt extrinſecus cutis & caro, ad protegenda interiora, quæ abſq; hoc velut ſepimento & munimento eſſent obnoxia & expoſita periculo. Mere

But this clothing of skin and fleſh refers rather to thoſe inward, more noble and tender parts, the heart, liver, brain and bowels, theſe are encloſed with skin and fleſh, leſt they ſhould take cold; theſe are fenced with bones and ſinews, leſt they ſhould take hurt. Hence death is called an *unclothing.* Death ſtrips us, not only to the skin, but of the skin, *We that are in this tabernacle, do groan, being burthened, not for that we would be unclothed,* (2 *Cor.* 5. 4.) that is, not that we would *put* off this garment of skin and fleſh, this natural clothing, but we would have a ſupernatural clothing upon it, even a veſt of glory put upon theſe veſts of frailty. This Scripture in *Job* is of the ſame language with that of *Paul, Thou haſt clothed me with skin and fleſh.*

It is said of the vertuous woman (*Prov.* 31. 21.) *That she is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are all clothed with skarlet*, or *double garments*. The great and most wise God hath prepared such clothing for mans inward parts, that he needs not fear snow or cold, he hath provided double garments, two suites, skin and flesh. Flesh is an under garment, and skin is an upper garment: flesh covers the bones, and skin covers the flesh. Anatomists observe, that man hath two distinct coates of skin upon his flesh, or mans skin is a lined garment, yet differing from other garments, for here the lining is uppermost. This uppermost skin, or as some call it, the *scarf-skin* is without sense, you may thrust a needle thorow it without pain. There was great reason it should be so, that it might defend the skin under it from external injuries, as also attemper the exquisite sense thereof, and so become the *medium* or mean of touching: for all sensation is made by some mean, and is either altogether hindred, or much disturbed by the immediety of the object and the organ. Hence when this cuticle or *scarf-skin* is off or broken, the gentlest touch upon that bared part, breedeth much pain, but spoileth the true sensation. Under this curtain or *scarf-skin*, the true and proper skin lyeth; The Greeks call it δέρας becaus it may be flayed off, or δέρμα, *quasi* δέμα, a band, because it compasseth or knitteth together the whole body. This skin is a seamless garment, yet it hath diverse out-lets made for the relief and ease of nature; some of which are obvious to sense, others called *pores*, are both innumerable and imperceptible.

To this double vesture of skin, *flesh* is added, as having according to *Jobs* philosophy, an immediate conjunction or contiguity with one another. But our Philosophers in their professed descriptions of mans Anatomy, place two parts between the skin and the flesh, namely *fat* and *the fleshy membrane*. Concerning which, they who please may consult the writings of learned Naturalists. I shall not step out into such digressions.

Further, As God hath given us a clothing of skin and flesh: so he hath given us armour under that clothing. *Thou hast fenced me with bones and sinews.*

The word which we translate *fenced*, is the same used, *Chap.* 1. 10. where Satan tells the Lord that he hath secured the state of *Job*, so, that he could not come nigh it, *Hast not thou made an hedge about him?* The devil made many assaults against *Job*, but he

could not batter down that hedge, it was cannon-proof. As the state, so the body of *Job* was fenced: if we look upon the skelleton of a man, we shall see the proportion of an armour, breast and back formed up with *bones and sinews.*

עצמות *Ossa à robore & firmitate dicta.*

Bones are for strength, and sinews for motion, bones being firm and stiff in themselves are moveable by the sinews. There are other parts of the body which concur to the making up of this armour, gristles, muscles, ligaments, membranes, all which serve for motion, fastning, and defence, as well as *bones and sinews*: but these being the principal and most known are here expressed for all the rest.

ἑδέα τῶ σώματι στασιν καὶ ὀρθότητα καὶ εἰς ὃ πᾶν ἔχοντα. *Hippocr.*

Bones give the body stability, straightness and form. They are as the carcase of a Ship, whereto the rest of the parts are fastned, and by which they are sustained. They are as the posts, pillars, beams and rafters of a house, by whose knittings and contiguations the whole building is both proportioned and supported. And though the bones are for number very many, and in their forms exceeding various, some thick, some thin, some plain, some hollow, some of a greater, others of a lesser bore, yet are they so connected and fitted together by articulation or by coalition, by contiguity or continuity (as the Anatomists speak) that they all appear as one bone, or pack of bones.

Sinews or nerves derive their pedigree from the brain, and are the organs by which the animal spirits are conveyed, and flow into the whole body, and with them both sense and motion. Sinews have so much of strength in them, that the same word is put to signifie both strength and sinews; and to do a thing strongly and vigourously, is to do it (*nervosè*) sinewously. It is wonderful which Naturalists write of the conjugations and uses of the sinews, to those labours I refer the studious Reader for further satisfaction. I have given enough to shew, what this Text calls me to, *That God hath indeed cloathed man with skin and flesh, and fenced him with bones and sinews.*

Some have quarrelled with the wisdom and goodness of God, for turning man altogether naked and unarmed into the world. This Scripture is enough to confute the unreasonableness of that quarrel. *Job* thankfully acknowledgeth, That he was *both clothed and armed*, thongh not in the sence of these complainers. It is more honourable for man to make himself artificial clothing and arms, then to have had none but natural; God hath given man reason

reaſon to invent, hands to prepare, and a tongue to call for thoſe things, which by a Law of nature are impoſed upon other creatures; the power of reaſon, and the skill of the hand are a better ſafeguard to man then any the beaſts have, and can provide whatſoever man wants to ſecure him either from cold or danger. And though the body, as now it ſtands, be but (as it were) the ſepulchre of that which God at firſt created, though we lie open to ſo many diſeaſes and deaths, that the ſoul may well be ſaid to inhabit an unwalled, and an unfortified City, yet man hath great cauſe for ever to extol the bounty of God in thoſe ſtill continued ennoblements of this earthly manſion, his mortal body. Yea, the noble ſtructure and ſymmetry of our bodies, invites our ſouls not only to thankfulneſs, but to admiration. One of the Ancients ſtileth man *a great miracle.* Another, *The miracle of miracles:* A third, *The meaſure of all things:* A fourth, *The pattern of the univerſe, the worlds epitome, The world in a ſmall volume, or a little world.* They alſo have diſtinguiſhed the whole frame of the body into three ſtories, in alluſion to a like frame obſervable in the world. Firſt, the ſuperiour, which they call intellectual or angelical, becauſe they conceived it to be the habitation of Angels or Intelligences. The ſecond or middle part they call celeſtial or heavenly, the ſeat of the Sun and Starrs. The third, Elementary, in which all corporeal creatures are procreated and nouriſhed. This diviſion of the world is eminent in man, for he alſo is a building of three ſtories. The head, which is the ſeat of reaſon, the manſion, the tower of wiſdom and underſtanding, is placed higheſt: the breſt or middle venter is the celeſtial part, wherein the heart, like the Sun, is predominant; ſome have called the Sun, *The heart of the World*; and the heart, *The Sun of mans body*, by whoſe luſtre, beams and influences, all the other parts are quickned and refreſhed; hence we ſay, when the heart failes all fails, and while the heart holds, all holds. The third part of the body, or the lower venter containing all parts neceſſary for the nutrition of individuals, or the propagation of the ſpecies, carrieth a cleare reſemblance with the elementary or the loweſt parts of the univerſe.

There are five things in particular, which as ſo many rounds of a ladder, may help us to raiſe our thoughts higher in the duty of holy admiration about this work of God.

Firſt, That God frameth up this goodly and beautiful fabrique

out

out of such mean and improbable materials. To consider out of what stuff our bodies are made, advanceth the honour of him who made us. Man can make his work (except the form) no better then the matter out of which he formeth it. But as the form of mans body is better then the matter, so the matter becomes better then it was, before it received that form.

Secondly, The matter out of which God maketh man is originally homogeneal, or but of one kind, yet there is a strange heterogeny or variety in the very substance, as well as in the shape of the several parts; which are therefore divided by the survaiers of this building, into parts similar and dissimilar. Is it not incredible to meer reason, that one lump should be spred out into thin, tender skin, wrought into soft flesh, extended into tough sinews, hardned into strong bones; that one piece should make an outward jerkin or cassock of skin, an under garment of flesh, columns and rafters of bones, bands and ties of sinews; that the same should make veins like channels to carry, and blood like water to be carried into every part to moisten and refresh it? When an Artificer buildeth an house, he requires more materials then one, he must have stones and timber, iron, lead, &c. to compleat his fabrique: but the Lord frameth all the parts, rooms and contrivances of the body out of one and the same mass. *Thou dost not know* (saith *Solomon*) *how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with childe* (Eccles. 11.5.) Who can know by a meer rational demonstration, how a solid substance should grow out of that which is so fluid? And that parts materially, as well as figuratively unlike, should arise out of a like matter?

Quomodo ex re tantula & sibi simili, tam variæ & discrepantes partes extiterunt; hæc profecto est stupenda omnino opificis nostri sapientia & vis ad quicquid effi iendum. Merl.

Thirdly, The work of God in the framing of man is internal, as well as external. A statuary, or an engraver will make the image or pourtraiture of a man, but his work is all outward, he cannot make bowels, or fashion a heart within, he cannot cut out veins, bones and sinews. The greatest wonders of creation are unseen. God hath packt many rarities, mysteries, yea, miracles together in mans chest. All the vital instruments and wheels, whereby the watch of our life is perpetually moved from the first hour to the last, are locked up in a curious internal cabinet, where God himself prepared the pulleys, hung on the weights, and wound up the chime by the hand of his infinite power, without opening of any part. As our own learned Ana-

Anatomiſt elegantly teacheth us in the Preface to his ſixth book.

Fourthly, The dimenſions, proportions and poiſe of mans body are ſo exact and due, that they are made the model of all ſtructures and artificials. Caſtles, Houſes, Ships, yea the Ark of *Noah* was framed after the meaſure and plot of mans body. In him is found a circular figure, and a perfect quadrat, yea the true quadrature of a circle, whoſe imaginary lines have ſo much troubled the Mathematicians of many ages.

Fifthly, In every part uſefulneſs and commodiouſneſs, comelineſs and convenience meet together. What beauty is ſtampt upon the face? What Majeſty in the eye? What ſtrength is put into the armes? What activity into the hands? What muſick and melody in the tongue? Nothing in this whole fabrique could be well left out or better placed, either for ornament, or for uſe. Some men make great houſes which have many ſpare rooms, or rooms ſeldom uſed; but as in this houſe there is not any one room wanting, ſo every room is of continual uſe.

Was ever clay thus honoured, thus faſhioned? *Galen* gave *Epicurus* an hundred years to imagine a more commodious ſcituation, configuration or compoſition of any one part of the body; And ſurely if all the Angels in heaven had ſtudied to this day, they could not have caſt man into a more curious mould, or have given a fairer and more correct edition of him. *This clay cannot ſay to him that faſhioneth it, What makeſt thou? Or this work, he hath no hands,* (Iſa. 45. 9.) The Lord hath made man ſo well, that man cannot tell which way to be made better; This work cannot ſay, He that wrought me had no hands, that is, I am ill wrought. As to ſay, you have no eyes, you have no ears, are reproofs of negligence and inadvertency, both in hearing and ſeeing. So when we ſay to a man, Surely you have no hands, our meaning is, he hath done his work, either ſloathfully or unskilfully. But this work of mans body ſhall not need to ſay unto God, he hath no hands, he hath given proof enough, that hands and head too were imployed about this work. Let us make it appear that we have hands and tongues, and hearts for him, that we have skin and fleſh, bones and ſinews for him, that we have ſtrength, and health, and life, and all for him; ſeeing all theſe are alſo derived from him, as appears in the next words, *Thou haſt granted me life and favour.*

Job

Job having thus described the natural conception and formation of his body, descendeth to his quickning and preservation. When God had formed man out of the dust of the earth, he then breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul; and thus when God hath formed man into the womb, given him skin and flesh, bones and sinews, then he gives life and breath and all things necessary, to the continuation of what he ha h wrought up to such excellent perfections. Our divine Philosopher teaches us this doctrine.

Verse 12. *Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.*

This verse holds out to us the *great Charter* of God to man, consisting of three royall grants. First, Life. Secondly, Favour. Thirdly, visitation. The bounty of God appears much in granting life, more in granting favour, most of all in his grant of gracious visitations. *Thou hast granted me life*, &c.

חיים עשית עמדי *Vitas fecisti.* Mont. *Vitam dispositi mihi.* Sep. *Quasi debito loco et ordine.*

The letter of the Hebrew is, *Thou hast made, or fitted for me life and favour.* The soul is the ornament of the body, life the lustre of our clay. Thou hast not thrown or hudled my life into my body, thou hast put it in exquisitely and orderly. The frame of the body is an exquisite frame, but the frame, the faculties, and powers, the actings and motions of the soul are far more exquisite. The inhabitant is more noble then the house, and the jewel then the cabinet. *As the life is better then meat, and the body then* (artificiall) *raiment* (Mat. 6.25.) So the life is better then the body, which is to it a natural rayment.

Thou hast granted me life, &c.

Life is here put metonymically for the soul, of which it is an effect, as the soul is often put for the life, whereof it is a cause.

We translate in the singular number, *life*, the Hebrew is plural, *Thou hast granted me lives.* But hath a man more lives then one? Some understand *Job* speaking not of corporall, but spirituall life; as our natural life is the salt of the body, to keep that from corrupting: so spiritual life, or the life of grace, is the salt of the soul, to keep that from corrupting.

Secondly, *Thou hast granted me lives*, that is, say others, temporal life and eternal life.

Thirdly, *Lives* may be taken for three great powers of life.

Man hath own life consisting of three distinct lives: For whereas there is a life of vegetation and growth, such as is in trees and plants: and a life of sense and motion, such as is in beasts of the earth, fowls of the air, and fishes of the sea: And a life of reason, such as is in Angels, whereby they understand and discourse; these three lives, which are divided and shared among all other living creatures, are brought together and compacted into the life of man. Whole man, is the epitome or sum of the whole Creation, being enriched and dignified with the powers of the invisible world, and of the visible put together, under which notion we may expound this Text, *Thou hast granted me lives*; a threefold life, or a threefold acting and exercise of the same life.

Thou hast granted.

Observe hence, *Life is the gift of God.*

With thee is the fountain of lives, the well, or *the veins of lives* (*Psal.* 36. 9.) The Psalmist alludes, either first to waters which flow from a fountain, and so doth life from God. Or, secondly, to mettals, *With thee is the vein of lives*; as all minerall veins, the veins of gold and silver, of lead and iron, &c. lye (as it were) in bank, in the bosome and bowels of the earth: so doth life in God. There is not the least vein of this quick-silver, in all the world, but comes from him Or, thirdly, The Psalmist alludeth to the veins of the body, which as so many rivers and rivolets, derive their blood from that red sea the liver. God hath a sea of life in himself, and all that live are fill'd with life from him. This is one of his Royal Titles, *The living God*; He is, *The living God*, not only *subjectivè*, because he liveth, but *effectivè*, because he enliveneth and quickneth all living creatures, *From him we receive life and breath* (*Acts* 17. 25.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being*, vers. 28. *In him we live*, &c. that is, *by him*, or *thorow him*, as the same Apostle teacheth (*Rom.* 11. 36.) The same power giveth us being, and maintains it. This is true, yet the context carrieth the preposition [*In*] further. For the Apostle having asserted, *verse* 37. *He is not far from every one of us*; subjoyns this as a proof, *For in him we live*, &c. implying, that man is, in a sense, contained in, or invested with God. The divine nature cannot be circumscrib'd with any thing, yet circumscribeth all things: For which *Paul* refers the *Athenians* to Heathen Poets who

מקור חיים
Vene vitarum.

Jovis omnia plena. Virg. *Iupiter est æther, est terra Iupiter cœlumque & omnia Iupitur, & siquid supra* Eschyl.

spake this truth in a carnal language, yet such as might be spiritualiz'd by a sanctified understanding. The result of which is, *That God is the authour and conservatour of our lives.* This glory is given also unto Christ, who is called, *The Prince of life*, because he hath life at command, *The Son quickneth whom he will.* Christ hath the power, not only of natural, but of spiritual and eternall life, *He is the Prince of lives* Job speaks in the language of Princes, *Thou hast granted*, &c. As they make out grants of lands and offices, so God makes a grant of life. The civil godship of Kings and Magistrates appears much in this, that they can grant a forfeited life, either by repreive for a time, or by pardon for ever. It is ordinary with men, to grant others leases for their lives, but they cannot grant them life. Princes can grant an offender a lease of that life which he hath, but no Prince can grant life to those who have it not. That's Gods peculiar, *Thou hast granted me life.*

חסד *Denotat in ponsum stultum vel exuberantiam boni.* Coc. *Augusta innocentia est secum dum leges justum esse; latius officiorum patet quam juris regula. Quam multa pietas, humanitas, liberalitas exigunt, quæ omnia extra publicas tabulas sunt?* Sen. *l.* 2. *de ira. Virtutum quædam seminaria tribuisti mihi & præsertim misericordiæ, quam sibi innatam ipse fatetur,* Job 31. 1. *Aquin.* * *Liberum arbitium tribuisti mihi.* Cajet.

And favour.

The word signifieth the purest, sincerest and most tender kindness, the fullest favour, the most courteous courtesie, *Gen.* 21. 13. Chap. 24 49. *Exod.* 15. 13. *Ruth* 1. 8. Hebrecians tell us. That it noteth an exuberancy of kindnesse, such as breaks the bounds, and exceeds the ordinary laws of love. It is but a poor way of loving, to love only by rule and measure. There is no true love can act beyond the rule which God gives, but love quickly exceeds the rules of men. Hence the Jews call those *Chasidim*, who are not only just by statute, giving every man his right, paying every man his due, but noble, heroicall, free-hearted and open-handed in their distribution of favours.

One Expositor by *favour* understands the seeds of grace and vertue, especially of charity and mercifulness, which (saith he) seem to have been connatural to *Job.*

Another interprets *favour* by **free-will.* But I pass these as perversions, not expositions of Scripture. And shall represent what is both safe and suitable.

First, Some restrain this *favour* to that which he received in the womb before he was born, or the favour which he had to be born, which is to be reckoned among very fallible favours. *Thou art he that took me out of the womb*, was *Davids* thankfull acknowledgement, *Psal.* 22, 9. The womb is to all infants a tempo-

rary

ſary priſon, and to ſome a grave. It is favour to have thoſe gates unlockt, and the little priſoner ſet ſafe at liberty.

Secondly, We may interpret it as an *adjunct*, or *an adverb*, ſhewing how the Lord granted him life; It is an uſual *Hebraiſme* to put the latter of two Subſtantives adverbially, *Joſh.* 2. 14: *We will deal kindly and truly with thee*, ſay the Spies to *Rahab*. The Originall is, *We will deal kindneſs and truth to thee*, which is alſo rendred kindneſs in truth, or kindneſs truly, that is, thou mayeſt truſt us: we do not flatter thee, and we will not deceive thee. So here, *Thou haſt granted me life and favour*; That is, life by favour, or life favourably; importing, that the receit of life is the receit of a great mercy; as if *Job* had ſaid, *I could not deſerve that thou ſhouldeſt beſtow life upon me: When I was formed and faſhioned in the womb, it was thy favour to quicken me: Mercy put breath into thoſe tender principles, and firſt rudiments of my body.* And ſeeing not only ſenſe and motion, are brought in by life, but reaſon alſo, and all the noble operations of it, *Job* had reaſon enough to ſay, *Thou haſt granted me life*, as a great, or with abundant favour.

Hæbraiſmus eſt quando ex duobus, ſimul poſitis ſubſtantivis unum adverbialiter ſumitur alterumq; determinat. Bold.

Hence obſerve,

Life is a ſpeciall favour of God.

There are divers ſorts of creatures which have not the favour of life beſtowed on them, no not the loweſt degree of life. The Lord hath given man not only life, but the higheſt degree of life; this is a high favour. It was *Satans* argument (*Chap.* 2.) *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life*; As if he had ſaid, *What is a mans body to his life? what are his eſtate, his lands, his gold and ſilver? what are all theſe dead commodities to his life? Life is the moſt precious of naturall bleſſings.* A worm (under this conſideration) is a more noble creature then the Sun, becauſe a worm hath life, which the *Sun* hath not. *The loweſt of a Superiour order, is better then the higheſt of an inferiour*; Though the *Sun* be the excellenteſt of all animate creatures, yet it moves (though in heaven) in a lower orb, then any thing that lives groveling on the earth. A leaf is more excellent then a *Pearl* or Diamond, becauſe a leaf hath life in it, which theſe have not; That opinion of voluptuous Atheiſts, or Epicures, delivered us by the *Preacher*, hath a truth in it, *A living dog is better then a dead Lyon* (Eccl. 9. 4:) For though (as that voice ſpake from heaven, *Rev.* 14. 13.) *Bleſſed are the dead that dye in the Lord*, and though curſed are the living that live without the *Lord*: In which ſenſe the pooreſt

dead Dog is better then the proudest Lyon alive; yet, consider man only within the line and compass of naturall life; then he that lives in the worst condition, is better then he that once was in highest dignity, but now is dead. It is usual in Scripture by a Dog to set forth the vilest estate of a man, and the most excellent by a Lyon. When *Mephibosheth* would shew how low he was in his own eyes, though the son of a noble Prince, he joyns these two, *Dead, and a Dog together*, 2 Sam. 9. 8. *What is thy servant, that thou should'st look upon such a dead dog as I am?* He calls himself not only a dog, as Christ did the woman of *Canaan*, and she acknowledged her self to be, but to lay himself as low as lowness it self, he calls himself a *dead dog*, implying, that life giveth some honour, and casteth a lustre upon every subject, which it inhabits, though it be the meanest. When *Esau* was near perishing with hunger (*Gen.* 25. 32.) he resolves thus, *I am at the point to dye, and what profit should this birth-right do to me?* As if he had said, Shall I keep my birth-right, and lose my life? my life is more precious. Thus he spake, and he spake profanely in it; yet there is some truth in what he spake; for if we take birth-right precisely in the notion of a civil priviledge; so life is better then a birth-right; but he is called profane *Esau*, because there was a spiritual priviledge in his birth-right, which he ought to have valued above his life. Any spiritual good thing is better then naturall life, but life is the best of naturall, and better then all civil good things. When the Prophet would express how great a blessing a King was to his people, he called him, *The breath of their nostrils*, Lam 4.29. and, *live for ever*, was the highest apprecation given the *Babylonian* Kings. The most noble imitations of art are about this piece of nature: It is the ambition of a painter to draw to the life, or to shadow the motions and actings of life. When we would commend a picture, we say, It is done to the life; how precious a favour is reall life, the very shadow of which is of so great a price? He that layeth down his life, payeth the greatest debt, whether to justice or to nature. Christ went to the highest price for, and shewed the greatest favour to sinners, when he parted with, and pawned this Jewel for them, his precious life.

This should minde parents, as to pray for quickning after conceptions, so to give thanks when the Embryon is quickned.

Now

Now if this naturall life be such a favour, What is spiritual and eternal life? *Thou hast given me life and favour*, or *life as a favour*.

Thirdly, By *favour*, in conjunction with life, we may understand the accidents of life; that is, those good things which accompany and accommodates our lives, *Thou hast given me life*, not a bare life, not a meer subsistence or being in the world, but with life thou hast also given me favour, many mercies and comforts to make my life sweet and pleasant to me.

Besides, *favour* takes in not only those outward comforts of health, strength, liberty, plenty, but those inward ornaments of life also; good education, and instruction in knowledge, both humane and divine. It appears, *Job* had a fair portion of these favours. His was not a naked, but a cloathed soul, a soul gilded and engraven all over with heavenly truths.

So that *Job* in this word reports the bounty and munificence of God towards him, in all the former additions and accomplishments of his life. Many have lives which they scarce look upon as a favour. *Some accidents of life, are more worth then the substance of it. Our well-being is better then our being.* It may prove a desirable favour to be rid of life. In which sense *Job* spake of himself at the first verse of this Chapter, *My soul is weary of my life.* His life was then a burden, but once a favour. *Thou hast granted me life with favour.*

Fourthly, *Job* may here intend spirituall and eternal favour. *Chesed* signifies the grace or favour of God in Christ, (*Psal.* 89 33.) *My loving kindness will I not take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.* If he fail in duty, I will chasten him in mercy, I will not remove mercy from him. The Vulgar translates, *Thou hast given me life and mercy*, which some expound of that special mercy, the pardon of his sin, and his washing from originall corruption; As if *Job* had said, I partake not only of life, but also of that which is better then life it self, Thy favour or loving-kindness, *Psal.* 63. 4 The favour of God in spirituall things, (in pardoning sin, in regenerating the soul, in sending the holy Spirit) is the perfection of his favour. What is man without that favour which makes him a son of God, but even a beautifull, or at most, a rationall beast? as *David* calls him, *Psal.* 49. 21. And should a man give thanks for outward favours only without any reflection upon spiritual; a beast, could he speak, might give such

Chesed *omnia beneficia Dei promiscuè complectitur* Coc. *Non solum vitam dodisti, sed cumulasti bonis omnibus quæ ad victum, bonorem, et rem vitæ necessariam pertinent. Hoc nomine complectitur etiam omnia beneficia, quæ ultra vitam Deus homini concedit, dum educandum eum, instituendum et informandum in lege sua et timore curat.* Merc.

Quoniam Chesed *significat aliquid perfectum in amore; id circa statuimus Jobum hic intelligere istam ἀγάπην sive studium quod Deus exerces erga suos quos facit filios suos in Christo,* Coc.

such thanks. The life of sense and growth is a mercy, but beasts and plants live thus: The life of reason is a greater mercy, but wicked men live thus; many are in hell, unto whom God granted this life, and they would be glad God would call in his grant, and take it from them: But unto these three lives God adds a fourth to his elect, even a life of grace through Jesus Christ. This is the favour of favours, and the blessing of all our blessings, except this favour be granted with our lives, it were better for us never to have had a grant of our lives. It is more eligible not to have been born, then not to be born again.

Chesed sumitur pro venustate corporis. Coc.

There is a fifth Interpretation, taking the word *Chesed* for corporall favour, or the beauty of the body, we say, such an one is well favoured, he hath an excellent feature; the favour of a man is seen in the feature of his face. Favour is the perfection of beauty. Some have a clear mixture of white and red, yet no favour. In this sense the word is used (*Isa.*40.6.) Where the Lord makes a proclamation, *The voice said, Cry, and he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field*; The word which we translate *goodliness*, is *Chesed*, *All flesh is grass* (man withers quickly) and *Chesed*, *the goodliness thereof*, all of man, his favour, beauty, strength, all these are as the *flower of the field*. Some read *goodness* for *goodliness*; the sense holds, if we take it so: the naturall, the morall goodness of a man is but a flower. As no goodliness, so no goodness of man, except spiritual, lasteth long, and that lasteth long and long, even for ever: Grace is not as the flower of the field, that is, durable substance: that (as the Prophet speaks there of the word of God in v. 8.) shall stand for ever. The grace of God is as lasting as the word of God, for his word is the externall seed or principle of grace. But all other goodness and goodliness of man, how good, how goodly soever, his other beauty, how beautifull soever, his strength, how strong, his favour, how well favoured soever, is but as the flower of the field, which is either cut down while it is green, or soon fades while it stands.

Take favour in this sense, and the sense of the whole verse is harmonious and sound. *Thou hast granted me life*; my body is formed and quickned, and more then so, *Thou hast given me favour*, my body is full of beauty and comelines. The comelines of the body is a favour received, and many receive favour, because they are comely. From either of which considerations we may call

call the comelineſs of the body *favour*, and it is no common favour, God denies this to many; he grants them the life ofnature, but not favour, yea, he grants many the life of grace, but not favour: *Beautifull ſouls are often ill-houſed; and filthy ſouls clearly houſed*; 'tis admirable when both beauties meet in the ſame man; *Moſes* was a *goodly childe* (Exod. 2. 2.) and a good man. As grace in the inward man is the beſt favour, ſo favour is graceful to the outward man.

Thou haſt granted me life andfavour,

And thy viſitation hath preſerved myſpirit:

פקד *Inſpectio. ἡ ὃ ἐπίσκα-ψις. Sept.*

Here is the third benefit to this *Royall grant, the viſitation of God.* One reads, *Thypreſence.* A ſecond, *Thy aſſiſtance:* A third, *Thy inſpection, thy over-looking or ſuperintendency hath preſerved myſpirit:* The *Hebrew* word ſignifies, The viſitation of a ſuperiour over an inferiour, as when maſters inquire into their families, or governors into their Colledges and *Hoſpitals*, to ſee whether the ſtatutes and orders appointed by the founders and benefactors be obſerved. There is a three-fold viſitation of God held forth in Scripture.

Viſitatio eſt Dominorum & ſuperiorum, cum ad Deum refertur, denotat providentiam. Pined.

1. A viſitation of condemnation. God viſits to take vengeance by deſtructive puniſhments, when warning is not taken, nor repentance ſhewed after corrective puniſhments. *Shall not* I *viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord? Shall not myſoul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this?* Jer. 5. 9.

2. A viſitation of correction (*Pſal.* 89. 32.) *If thy children forſake my Law,* &c. *then will* I *viſit their trangreſſion with the rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes*; *Neverthleſs, my loving kindneſs will I not utterly take from him,* &c. Though they break my laws, yet I will not break Covenant, they ſhall ſmart for it, but they ſhall not periſh for it. This is a fatherly viſitation.

3. A viſitation of conſolation. And this two-fold. 1. For deliverance out of an evil eſtate, and that either temporall, the Lord is ſaid to viſit his people *Iſrael*, when he delivered them out of *Egypt* (Exod. 4. 31.) or ſpiritual and eternal, *God hath viſited and redeemed his people*, ſaith the bleſſed *Virgin* (*Luk.* 1. 68.) that is, he hath viſited his people, to redeem them from ſin and Satan, death and hell, by Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly (Which is more proper to this text) there is a viſitation, for protecting in a good eſtate. When God (having cauſed

sed our line to fall in a fair place) draws his line of providentiall communication round about us, so M. *Broughton* translates, *Life and loving kindness hast thou dealt to me, and thy providence preserveth my spirit.* As if *Job* had said, *Thou dedst not only give me life and favour, but thou didst protect me for many years in the enjoyment of favours.* Providence was the hedge, not only of his outward, but of his inward estate, *Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.*

שמר *Summa selertia atq; diligentia prospexit, cavit, observavit, ut solent custodiæ et excubiæ nocturne, vel gregum custodes.*

The Verb which we translate, *hath preserved*, signifieth to preserve, both by strength and watchfulness The Noun expresseth a *Watch-tower* in Hebrew, because a watch-man standeth upon his Tower, and looks round about him, to espy and give notice of approaching dangers. The Lord preserveth both wayes, by his watchfulness, and by his strength: his eye is wakefull enough, and his arm is powerfull enough to preserve us. *He that keepeth Israel doth neither slumber nor sleep* (Ps. 121. 1.) *the Creatour of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary* (Isa 40. 28.) He that is thus wakefull, can easily visit, and he that is thus powerfull, can easily preserve those whom he visiteth.

Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.

Or But how did the visitation of God preserve the *spirit* of *Job*? ser what are we to understand by his spirit, which was thus preved?

The spirit of a man is taken three wayes;

First, For *life*. Thus God keepeth us from death, while he preserves our spirits.

Secondly, For the *soul*. Thus God preserveth our spirits, while he keeps us from falling into, or from falling in temptation; while he keeps our corruptions from prevailing and our graces from decaying.

Thirdly, The spirit of man is taken for his courage. Thus God preserveth our spirits, while he keeps us from needless fears, and cowardly despondencies. Doubtless *Job* had experience of the visitation of God preserving his spirit in all these senses, yet here he seems chiefly to intend the preservation of his life, which God had granted him with favour, or of these comforts which were granted him with his life.

Hence observe. First in generall,

That what God granteth, he preserveth.

It

It is a part of his grant, that he will preſerve. Should the Lord beſtow the greateſt ſtock of mercy upon us, and leave us to the wide world, we ſhould quickly looſe all; God is not like the Carpenter or the Maſon, who buildeth up a houſe, and then leaveth it to it ſelf, or to the care of others. The Lord ſurveys what he builds, and keeps up what he ſets up; all would come down elſe. Providence ſucceedeth Creation, or Providence is a continued Creation. As ſoon as ever the Lord had made man, and a garden, he took the man and put him into the Garden, which he had made, *to dreſs it and to keep it* (Gen. 2. 15.) God putteth the creatures under mans charge, yet he keepeth all creatures in his own charge, and eſpecially man: A Garden without a man to viſit it would ſoon be a wilderneſs. And man without God to viſit him, would ſoon be, or be in a wilderneſs, either out of order, or in danger. *Achiſh* promiſeth *David*, *I will make thee the keeper of my head for ever* (1 Sam. 28. 2.) His meaning was, he ſhould be *Captain of his guard*. Great Princes have their guards, they have keepers of their heads. The great King of heaven and earth is a guard to the meaneſt man, and the keeper of his head. God enquires of *Cain* for his brother *Abel* (Gen. 4.) *Where is Abel thy brother*? What is become of him? *Cain* was angry at the queſtion, *Am I*, (ſaith he) *my brothers keeper*? We ought to be one anothers keepers; our mutual viſitations ſhould preſerve one anothers ſpirits. Some are apt to think themſelves too good for the work: others that the work is too hard for them. It is our comfort, and it may be our aſſurance, that God hath neither of theſe thoughts, *The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy ſhade upon thy right hand. The Sun ſhall not ſmite thee by day, nor the Moon by night. The Lord ſhall preſerve thee from all evil; He ſhall preſerve thy ſoul: The Lord ſhall preſerve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth and for evermore* (Pſal. 121. 5.) How large a writ or patent of protection is granted here? No time ſhall be hurtfull, neither *day nor night*; which includes all times. Nothing ſhall hurt, neither Sun nor Moon, nor heat nor cold. Theſe include all annoyances Nothing ſhall be hurt, *Thy ſoul ſhall be preſerved, thy out-goings and thy comings in ſhall be preſerved.* Theſe include the whole perſon of man, and him in all his juſt affairs and actions. Nothing of man is ſafe without a guard, and nothing of man can be unſafe, which is thus guarded. They ſhall be kept, who can ſay, *The Lord is our keeper*. And they cannot

be kept, no not by legions of Angels, who have not the Lord for their keeper. None can keep us, but he, and he hath promised to keep us *for evermore*. Some men are weary of their offices, and some are put out of office; God is neither. In that Prophetical curse against *Judas*, tis said, *Let another take his office* (Ps. 109. 8.) What office? It is this word, and notes there the office of looking to, or of preserving the souls of others, we commonly call it, *The cure of souls*. Such is the office of all the Ministers of Christ, That's *Episcopacy by Divine right*; this in the text is *divine Episcopacy*. That word which here in *Job* we translate *visitation*, and in the Psalm now cited, *office* is called *Episcopacy* by the Apostle (*Act.* 1. 21.) Christ is the great Bishop or visitour both of our souls and bodies. He is the œcumenical Bishop. The whole world is his Diocess, He preserveth man and beast. See more of this point, Chapter, 7. 20.

Præfecturam ejus accipiat alter, id est, omnia quæ in ejus cura sunt potestate habet.

Again, For as much as this visitation which extendeth to the whole man, is here in the letter determined upon the Spirit. We may observe,

First, Taking spirit for *life*,

That as our well-being, so our being in the world is at the daily dispose of God.

The living God not only giveth, but maintaineth our lives. We live not by bread, while we are healthy, nor by medicines, when we are sick; but by the word of God. His visitation doth all.

Secondly, Take *spirit* for the *soul*, then we are taught,

That our souls are not independently immortal or incorruptible.

As the life of the whole man is not, so neither is the life of the soul, of, or in it self, without support from God. The Angelical spirits who were never married to bodies of earth, stand not meerly by Creation, but by Providence. The visitation of God preserveth those spirits, how much more the spirits of men, which are espoused to dust and clay.

Thirdly, As spirit signifieth the soul, not only in its naturall but in its spiritual state, or in the state of grace, We learn,

That our spiritual stock and treasure are in danger, and would decay, if the power and care of God did not preserve our spirits.

Grace cannot keep it self, if left to its self. We should loose, not only degrees of grace, but all grace, were it left in our own hands,

hands: But because it is grace, therefore it is not left in our own hands, and because grace is not left in our own hands, therefore it cannot be lost. So the Apostle clearly (1 *Pet.* 1. 4.) *We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.* The word signifies to keep, as a City beleaguered without by a strong enemy, is kept by a Garison. Man had at the first an excellent estate in spirituals. though it cannot be said (properly) that he had grace (for that is in the hand of a Mediator) yet he had the image of God and perfect innocency, but because God did not visit his spirit by fresh assistances, he was stript of all, and fell from the throne of his created glory. As God visits our souls by preventing grace, to give us what we had not; so he visits us by his preserving and persevering grace, to continue what he hath given.

Lastly, Forasmuch as (though God createth and careth for the whole man, yet) the visitation of God is expressed only, as to the spirit. We may observe,

That God doth chiefly take care of, and provide for the spirit or soul of man.

When God formed the body of man at first, out of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, it is not said he became a living body, or a living man, *But, man became a living soul.* So here, the work of providence is not enlarged to the whole man, but restrained to his spirit; as if the Lord did scarce think our bodies either worth, or needing a visit in comparison of our spirits. And seeing God cares for nothing in us, so much as for our spirits, should not our care be chiefly for our spirits? The soul is (upon the matter) all man, ought not man to be most of all for his soul? Shall the thoughts of God be most busied, his care and inspection most fixed upon our spirits, and shall not ours? While Christ in a manner dischargeth us of our outward man (*Mat.* 6. 25.) *Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on*; His meaning was, to charge us more deeply with the inward man; yet how many are there, whose outward man stands them in more cost and care, in more thoughts and visitations for one day, then their spirits or inward man doth for a whole year, yea, for their whole lives! Visitations are frequent and serious for the preserving of the body: but where shall we finde serious thoughts of visiting the soul?

Take this word further, *If it be the visitation of God which pre-*

serveth our spirits, we should often visit God with prayer, intreating him to continue these visitations. Prayer is our visiting God, as providence is Gods visiting of us, and we should visit God by prayer, not only (as they, *Isa* 26.) in trouble, but in our peace: we should desire him to visit our estates, our families, but especially our souls and spirits in their most flourishing condition. The Apostle useth it as an argument to keep us from distracting thoughts (*Phil.* 4.2.) *Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand, be carefull in nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, let your request be made known unto God*, The Lord is at hand let not your hearts be troubled. Visit God in duty who is at hand to visit you in mercy. Though there be an infinite distance between God and man, yet God is not far from any man, and he is ever near some men. Let not us be strangers to God, when we hear he maketh continual visits to us. *Thy visitation doth preserve my spirit.*

Verse 13. *And these things hast thou hid in thine heart, I know that this is with thee.*

Some read the first clause (which adds sharpness to it) with an interrogation. *And hast thou hid these things in thine heart?* is it so with thee, or hast thou dealt so with me indeed?

The heart of God, is the will, purpose or decree of God: These are a vast repository, wherein all things are laid up.

And these things hast thou hid, &c.

What things? what is the antecedent to these things?

1. Some say, His afflictions, *These things*, that is, these afflictions, which thou hast now laid upon me, were hid in thine heart: thou hast shewed me many favours, while in secret thou didst prepare rods for me.

2. The antecedent *to these things* is mercy, *life, favour and visitation*, spoken of before, say others; as if *Job*? had spoken thus; *This bill of blessing now read, these priviledges now reckoned up, were hidden in thine heart: thou hast had gracious intentions towards me, while thou hast been smiting me.*

I know all this is with thee.

Scio quia universorum memineris Vulg.

That is, Thou remembrest all this, and keepest a record of it thee. The Vulgar makes this the text, *I know thou remembrest all things*, or all men. Some

Some (supposing the antecedent to be his afflictions) make out this harsh and unbecoming sense, as if *Job* had thus uttered his minde to God, *I now perceive thou hast had coles of anger raked up in the ashes, while those warm beams of love did shine upon me. Thou hast held out mercy in thine hand, but somewhat else lay in thine heart.* This interpretation in the common understanding of it, is most unworthy of God. It is the wickedness of men to speak fair, and do some courtesies, while cruelty and revenges are hid in their hearts. When *Esau* (*Gen.* 27. 41.) saw himself defeated of the blessing by his brother, *He said in his heart, The dayes of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I slay my brother Jacob:* Here's the character of malice, he gave neither brother nor mother ill language, but *he said in his heart.* The holy God never speaks good to them, to whom he intends evil. The Creatour needs not daub or prevaricate with his creatures.

Quasi haec malevolus in animo recondita in tempus opportunum asservasset ut nec opinantem opprimeret Atrox querimonia. Merl.

I grant indeed that the Lord giveth many wicked men outward favours, and speaks them fair in his works, but he never speaks them fair in his Word, *Say, Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him* (Isa. 3. 11.) Men are apt to flatter, but flattery is much an abomination to the Lord, as it is below him.

I grant also, That the Lord giveth his own people many favours, and speaketh real kindnesses to them, while he hides affliction in his heart. What evil soever he brings upon them, he hath thoughts to do them good, and hath nothing but good for them in his thoughts.

We understand by those *hidden things*, the mercies which *Job* with his last breath had enumerated: then the words import two things:

First, An argument to move the Lord not to destroy him, or to assure his own heart that he would not. As if he had said, Lord, I know thou remembrest well, what thou hast done for me, what cost thou hast been at in making me at first, and in preserving me hitherto; surely then thou wilt not pull all down in a moment.

Secondly. The words may import that the Lord in afflicting *Job* had used only a kinde of sacred dissimulation. A dissembler carrieth himself, as if he had no intent to do what he is resolved to do; it is usual with men thus to dissemble hatred, and so have some

some their love. He that purposeth much good to another, hideth it sometimes under sowr language and unkindest usuage. *Joseph* had most endeared affection toward his brethren, yet he put a disguise of anger upon it, acting the part of a severe man, who lyeth at catch to finde out advantages and pick quarrels. *Joseph* used many stratagems of love, to entangle his brethren, and wrapt up his good will, in hard speeches, and rough carriages: Nothing appearing less then what indeed he most was, *A loving brother forgetfull of nothing but injuries*; *Job* seems to have had such a conception of God, while he saith, *These things hast thou hid in thine heart*; and then his sense riseth thus, *Lord, I know thou bearest favour and good will towards me still. The fire of thy love is not extinct, but covered. Thou dost but personate an enemy, thou art my friend: thou draweſt a cloud betwixt me and the light of thy countenance, but thy countenance is still as full of light towards me as ever, and though I see nothing but sorrows on every side, yet I know mercies are hid in thine heart.* Thus the words are an assertion of *Job*'s faith and assurance, that God loved him, while his chastenings lay most heavy upon him. Hence observe, First,

That the Saints while they are strong in faith, are able to discern the favour of God through the clouds and coverings of his most angry dispensations.

This they can do, and when they can, they are arrived at a great height in grace. To maintain our interest in Christ through disadvantages, is strong faith. The woman of *Canaan* (Mat. 15. 26.) knew her pardon and acceptance were hid in the heart of Christ, while he called her dog, and would scarce vouchsafe to cast an eye upon her. Faith did this, and faith can do the like at this day. But every true faith will not do it. There is a kinde of miracle wrought in such beleiving: So Christ concludes with that woman (*v.* 28.) *O woman, great is thy faith.* Truth of grace is not enough for every work of grace: some works will not be done without strength, as well as truth. Weak faith is ready to say, Mercy is lost, when it is but hidden, and that God means us no good, when we do not enjoy good. But the strong faith speaketh on this wise; *Lord, I know there is mercy in thine heart towards me, though I see nothing in thy face but frowns, and feel nothing from thy hand but blows. Let God do what he pleaseth with me, I will not have a jealous thought of him, or suspect his intentions towards*

me

me, whatsoever his actions be. Secondly, observe,

We may gather arguments of support in our greatest sufferings from the apprehension of concealed mercies.

The skill and holy subtilty of faith can winde it self in Gods bosome, and from what it findes lying secretly there for us, encourages us to bear what is openly laid upon us.

Lastly, Observe, *A beleivar looks upon all his receives, as coming out of the heart of God.*

As he can look into his own heart, and see all the Commandments and revealed counsels of God hidden there, so he can look into the heart of God, and see all the comforts he wanteth hidden there. Men of the world, take their comforts only from the hand of God; Saints take theirs from the heart of God. It putteth the price upon every blessing, when we can look upon speciall love, as the spring of it. Look how much of the heart of our friend we can see in a courtesie, so much true value there is in it. Hence it is usual with man, when he wonld express his freeness to those who desire a favour at his hands, to say, Yes, *Take it with heart and good will, you have it with all my heart*: We read of one, who complained he had received but a golden cup, when he saw another receive a kisse from a noble Prince. A kisse is a better gift then a cup of Gold. Love is the richest present. How happy then are they, who have the golden cup, and a kiss too? much from the hand, and all from the heart, from the love of God.

Job having thus revised and read over the particular of his former mercies received from the bounty and free love of God, revives his complaint about, and renews his desire of deliverance from present sorrows in his next address to God.

JOB,

JOB, Chap. 10. Vers. 14, 15, 16, 17.

If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.

If I be wicked, wo unto me; if I be righteous yet will I not lift up my head: I am full of confusion, therefore see thou mine affliction.

For it encreaseth; thou huntest me as a fierce Lyon, and again thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me.

Thou renewest thy witnesses against me, and encreasest thine indignation upon me: changes and war are against me.

THe connection of these words lyeth somewhat in the dark, and this inevidence hath caused divers conjectures about it.

1. Some make the connection with the 13. verse, *I know* (said *Job*) *that this is with thee*; and here he declareth what was with him, namely, that, *If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.*

2. The connection is made by others with the 12. verse, *Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit, yet if I sin thou markest me*, &c. As if *Job* had said, Though thou hast been pleased to make so many grants of favour, and hast done all those things for me, which were hidden in thine heart, yet I know thou wilt not bear with, or connive at me, *If I sin against thee:* Thou hast not given me those mercies, that I should be imboldened to transgress the rule of thy justice; no, though thou hast done much for me, *Yet if I sin, thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.*

3. A third goeth higher, and makes these words depend upon the third verse, where *Job* puts three queries to God; the last of which is, *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest shine upon the counsel of the wicked?* I know it is not, for ('tis like I might escape as well as another, yet, (*if I sin, thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity*; *If I be wicked, wo unto me.* Mine own experience proves thee far enough from shining upon the counsel of the wicked. Behold, clouds and darkness are upon me.

There

There is a fair sense in any of these connections; which to determine is not easie; *I* shall leave all three before the Reader.

Vers. 14. *If I sin, then thou markest me.*

If I sin.

Sin standeth here in opposition to wickedness; *Thou wilt not shine upon the counsel of the wicked.* And, *verse* 15. *If I be wicked, then woe unto me, for if I sin then thou markest me.* Sin is any transgression against, or deviation (though but an hairs bredth) from the rule, *if I fail* be it never so little.

Then thou markest me.

שמר

The Original hath four significations, which occasion as many different interpretations of the Text:

First, To preserve, and that two wayes; first, by protecting from those evils which others would bring upon us (*Psal.* 141.9.) *Keep me from the snare which they have laid.* That is, Protect me from the danger which their snares threaten me with. So at the 12*th* verse of this Chapter, *Thy visitation doth preserve my spirit.* Secondly, It is rendred to preserve by *sparing*, or not bringing those evils upon us, which our sins have deserved. So the *Vulgar* here, who to make out his sense, puts the latter into the form of an interrogation, *If I have sinned, and thou hast spared me for a time, Wherefore then dost thou not acquit me from mine iniquity?* As if the meaning of *Job* were this. When in former times I sinned against thee, thou wast pleased to remit of thy severity, and deal gently with me, *Thou didst spare me, as a father spareth a son that serveth him.* Why is the tenour of thy dispensations so much changed from what it was, seeing thou art a God that changest not, and I am but what I was, a weak and changeable man? Why am I not charged with sin, and not set free as sometimes (I have been) from sorrow, the fruit of it? Wilt thou deal with me, who sin out of infirmity, or against my will, as with those who are wicked, and have a will to sin?

Si peccavi et ad horam pepercisti mihi, &c. Vulg.

Secondly, To prevent others from doing what they desire, or our selves from what they fear (*Psal.* 18.23.) *I was upright before him, and I kept my self from mine iniquity*; As if he had said, I have maintained such a strict watch over my own heart, that I

have prevented my self from falling into that sin which I was most subject to, and in danger of, both in regard of my constitution and temptation. Taking this meaning of the word, the whole verse is rendred thus, *If, or, when I am ready to sin, thou (stoppest, or) preventest me, Why then dost thou not acquit me from mine iniquity?* As if he had said, Lord, wilt thou deal with me, as with a wicked man? Thou knowest that I am not wicked, for by thy preventing grace, thou hast kept me from all wickedness, and stopt me from many sins.

Whence note,

That the remembrance of the power of God in keeping us pure from greater sins, is an argument that he will spare us, though we have (through infirmity) fallen into sin.

He that holds us from iniquity, will not destroy us for iniquity. Some are stopt from sin, and storm when they are stopt; these have no reason to think, God will spare them, because he hath stopt them. Thousands are stopt from sin, who neither know what it is to sin, nor that they have been stopt from sin. These cannot plead this point: As it is no vertue to endure what is not grievous to us: so no grace not to do what is not joyous to us, when we do it. But to know we are stopt from a pleasing sin, and rejoyce at it, to see how our corruptions have been prevented, and to bless God for it; this is a great degree of grace. As there is a preventing grace, which beginneth with us, while we are strangers from God, and are walking on in the wayes of sin; so there is a preventing grace, watching over us after we are turned to God, lest we fall into sin. Experience of this may be a sweet support unto the soul under the saddest afflictions, and in the darkest night of spiritual desertions.

אם־אחלי לי יללו׃

Ejulatu deduxit. Rab. Mos. Kimchi.

Thirdly, The word signifieth to keep in prison, or in safe custody. The Noun is a *prison* in Hebrew. And thus the sense is given three wayes, as an Assertion, as an Interrogation, as an Imprecation. First, as an Assertion, *If I have sinned, thou wilt, or thou mayest imprison me, and not acquit me from mine iniquity.* Whence note,

That the best and dearest of Gods servants may look for straits, if they walk loosly.

The Lord will shut them up, if they presume and take undue liberty, or grow licentious. They shall be either humbled or destroyed, who turn the grace of God (that is, the manifestation

of

of his grace, either by his word or by his works) into wantonness. God will not cocker his own children, and dandle them so, as to forget to correct them, if they forget him and their own duty. If *Israel* sin, *Israel* shall smart for it; and if *Job* sin, *Job* must look to be laid in prison for it. Thus he speaks acquitting God from shining upon the counsels of Wicked men, seeing he will not spare, no not his own children, if they sin against him.

Valde durum videtur, ut si quid peccavarim perpetuò me in carcere custodiaq; arctissima detineas, neq; unquam peccati pœnas remittere velis. Pined.

Secondly, The sense is given by an Interrogation, *If I sin, Wilt thou therefore shut me up in prison? Wilt thou not acquit me from mine iniquity?* And so he pleadeth with God, as using too much severity and harshness against him, *What, shall I be laid by the heels for every fault? Shall I be arrested and clapt up in irons for every sin? Wilt thou imprison me, and not acquit me from mine iniquity?* They who are most wicked, deserve no worse then this, and shall I, if I do but sin, receive such measure? Where are thy compassions, and the sounding of thy bowels? are they restrained? It should seem so, else thou wouldest not thus restrain and imprison me.

An simulac peccavi observas me, &c. Jun.

Thirdly, As an imprecation, *If I have sinned, according as I am charged, imprison me as long as thou wilt, and do not acquit me from mine iniquity:* if I am such a man as my friends judge me to be, I expect no favour; let me be poor and sick still, torture me, rack me, do what thou wilt with me. Like that of *David*, Psal. 7. 4, 5. *If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me, &c. Let the enemy persecute my soul and take it, yea let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust.* I ask no favour, if I am such a man as mine enemies have represented me: or if I have done that for which they challenge me.

Verba jurantis & contestantis suam innocentiam, si peccavi imprecor mihi durissimam custodiam. Bold.

Fourthly, To observe and mark, it importeth a critical, a curious observation; to mark exactly, (*Psal.* 130. 3.) *If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, who shall stand?* But doth not the Lord mark iniquity? Doth not he take notice of every sin acted by any of the children of men, especially by his own children? Why then doth the Psalmist put it upon an *If*? If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity. 'Tis true, the Lord marks all iniquity to know it, but he doth not mark any iniquity in his children to condemn them for it: So the meaning of the Psalm is, *That if the Lord should mark sin*, with a strict and severe eye, as a Judge to charge it upon the person sinning, no man could bear it. Master

Refertur ad exquisitiam Dei observationem universarum humanæ vitæ actionum. Rob. Abran. Tygur. Reg. 70.

Observas me ne ungnam lateant peccata. Augustin. Quoties peccavi id diligentissimè notasti. Merc.

Broughton translates, *when I sin, thou dost watch me*; watching is more then marking; as if the Lord had taken up a stand upon a high place, and did there compose himself to see what's done; or to make annotations upon the whole text of mens lives all the world over.

Whence observe,

That *God takes notice of the sins and failings of his own people.*

If I sin, then thou markest me; and in the 14*th* Chapter, verse 16. *Thou numbrest my steps, dost thou not watch over my sin?* Thou numbrest my steps, What steps? He meaneth not the steps of his outward, but of his inward man: or the steps of his outward man in order to the inward. There is a morall walking, *Walk before me and be upright*: walking is conversing or acting: so, *Thou numbrest my steps*, thou tellest my morall motions, the actings of my soul and body, what I do, and what I think, *Dost thou not watch over my sin?* And again (*Chap.* 31. 4.) *Doth not he see my wayes, and count all my steps?* That is, how my conversation is ordered, both toward himself, and toward my neighbour? Thus the Lord counteth all our steps, we cannot step aside or tread awry, but he observes us. There are two that keep a record of our lives.

First, God he followeth us up and down, as with pen, ink, and paper to write our actings.

Secondly, Our own consciences (which are as God within us) keep a record too, they write our lives, and count our steps. Many cannot read the book of Conscience, and so know little that is in it: But a time will come (if Conscience, be not purged by the blood of Christ) when they shall perfectly read all their sins in the book of Conscience. And if conscience, which is Gods deputy, then, much more God, who is the Judge of conscience marketh us if we sin. God needs not judge upon information, but upon his own observation. He will reprove every man whom he doth not pardon: and is able to set before us in order, whatsoever any of us have done. How then do some say, *That God sees not sin in his children? Job* saith, that God marked his sin; but according to this doctrine, he should rather have said, *If I sin, thou dost not mark me.* Some through ignorance sin and see it not, sin and perceive it not; but no man (among all the multitudes of men) can sin unseen, or unperceived by God, *If I sin, then thou markest me.*

And

And thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.

לא תנקני

Non purges me ut sim immunis ab omni peccato.

Will not the Lord acquit? why have we a Gospel then? what's the business of mercy? and where's the efficacy of Christs blood? Doth not this purchase, and do not they offer acquittances from iniquity? The words are interpreted three wayes.

First, That *Job* speaks from his unbeleif, as if he could not pardon through the thick cloud of his troubles, or have any evidence, that God hath mercy in store for him, while he endured such plenty of miseries.

Secondly, that he speaks thus, upon a supposition of inpenitency; as if he had said, if I sin and humble not my self, thou wilt not acquit me.

Thirdly, That by *iniquity* he means his affliction, putting the cause for the effect: So, *Thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity*, is, thou wilt not take away these afflictions, which are counted as the *proceed or issue* of mine iniquity.

Hence observe,

First, *Sin is a debt.*

Every acquittance supposeth an obligation. All men, as creatures, are in a debt of duty to God, and when they fail in that, they are in a debt of penalty, as sinners.

Observe, secondly,

When sin is pardoned, the sinner is acquitted, his debt is taken off, and his bonds are cancelled.

Pardon is our discharge, our *quietus est*, sealed in the blood of Christ. All process at law, or from the law, is then prohibited: there's no more to be said, or done against us.

Again, The word signifies to cleanse and purge, as well as to acquit; Note from it,

That as sin defileth the soul, so pardon cleanseth it.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter then snow, was *Davids* prayer for pardon after his great defilement, *Psal.* 5.1. 7. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*, 1 *John* 1. 9.

Fourthly, Forasmuch as *Job* groaning under burdens of sorrow speaks so often about the pardon of sin, we learn,

That while sin remaineth (to our sense) unpardoned, the soul

soul seeth no way to get out of sorrows.

The removing of affliction is a sign that sin is forgiven, and the sense of our forgiveness, is an argument that affliction shall be removed.

Fifthly, taking the former words in conjunction with these, *If I sin* (knowingly and wickedly, as they charge me) *Thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.* Observe,

That a persisting sinner, is an unpardoned sinner.

There is abundant mercy for returning sinners, but *I* know of none for those that resolve to go on in sin. There is a promise of repentance, and a promise to repentance, but there is no promise which doth not either offer or require repentance, *Repent and thou shalt be saved* is the tenour of the Gospel, as well as *beleive and thou shalt be saved.* Though many who are going on in their sins, are overtaken by grace, yet there is no grace promised to those who go on in their sins. The holiest are threatned with wrath if they do; surely then, none are put into an expectation of mercy, if they do. The promises either finde us repenting, or they cause us to repent. No sinner is pardoned for repentance, or without it. *Job* speaks that language more clearly in the words following, which some make an exposition of these.

Verse 15. *If I be wicked, wo unto me.*

If I be wicked.

What it is to be wicked, hath been shewed, and the difference between a wicked man and a sinner discovered, at the 7*th* verse, upon those words, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.*

Woe unto me.

The word is derived (saith one of the Rabbins) from a root signifying to *howl:* Great mourning is a kinde of howling; and they who are in woe, are bid to howl (*Isa.* 13. 6. *Chap.* 23. 1, &c.) Wicked men howl rather then pray in their distress, because of their extream worldly woe, *They have not cryed unto me with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds,* Hos. 7. 4.

There are legal woes, and there are evangelical woes. The Law cries woe, and so doth the Gospel: Gospel woes are the the worser of the two; for if the Law say woe to us, the Gospel may say mercy to us; but if the Gospel say, woe to us (as it doth to hypocrites, who abuse, and to unbeleivers, who refuse mercy)

mercy) where shall we have mercy? All woes may be understood in this place, Law-woes and Gospel woes, temporall woes and eternall woes, *if I be wicked then woe unto me.* Hence observe,

Woe is the portion of wicked men.

Though they laugh, yet woe is their portion, yea they are therefore threatned with woe, because they laugh (*Luk.* 6 25.) *Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep.* Some wicked men are as merry, as if mercy were their peculiar. But we may say to their mirth, what doth it? Or if we should ask them, What they do to make themselves so merry: *David* will resolve us what their course is (*Psal.* 36. 2.) *The wicked flattereth himself in his own eyes, untill his iniquity be found to be hateful.* He that would be flattered, shall never want a flatterer, for if none will do it, he will do it himself. He speaks well of himself. and therefore he thinks all's well. But usually he hath some others ready enough to speak well of him too. The true Prophets complained of the false for *crying, peace, peace, when there was no peace,* for saying all is well, when they should say, all is woe. But though wicked men flatter themselves, and though they get their neighbours to flatter them, yea though the Ministers flatter them, yet God will not flatter them; and at last their own Consciences will not flatter them neither. Conscience will preach them a Sermon of woes at last, though possibly it hath been silent through ignorance, or silenced through malice for a long time.

As all the promises of grace and mercy hang over the heads of the godly and sincere; which way soever they go, a cloud of blessings drops and distils upon them: So clouds of wrath, and blood hang over the heads of wicked men, dropping upon them, yea dropping upon them when they suppose the Sun shineth upon them.

Secondly consider who speaks this; *If I* (saith *Job*) *be wicked, then wo unto me.*

Henec observe, That

A godly man may put the worst cases to himself.

The Scripture puts such cases to godly men, therefore they may put such to themselves (*Rom.* 8. 13.) *If ye live after the flesh ye shall dye,* saith the Apostle, writing to the Saints. Though such a supposition cannot be resolved into this position, *A godly man*

shall

shall dye, yet the supp osition is true, if he liveth after the flesh he shall dye. So the Apostle of himself, and his fellow-Apostles, yea of the Angels. *If we or an Angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you then that which we have preached, let him be accursed* (Gal. 1. 9.) And as *Paul* propheſied a curse upon any, either Apostle or Angel, who should preach a false Gospel, so a *woe* upon himself, if he should negle & to preach the true Gospel, 1 *Cor.* 9, 16. They who are above all curses, may be threatned with a curse. And they who shall certainly be preserved from doing that which inevitably brings the curse, may be told of a curse in case they should do it.

They put dangerous suppositio. s oppoſite to these, who say, *Let a godly man be never so wicked, yet it shall be well with him; let him sin as much as he will, yet it shall be well with him.* The Spirit of God never puts such suppositions, As the Scripture speaks often to perswade, so sometimes to terrifie the godly from sin, but never a title which may be an encouragement to sin. It speaks much to keep up their hearts in an assurance of pardon, in case they fall into sin, and much more to keep down their corruptions, and to preserve them from falling into sin. Though there be a truth in it, that how much soever a godly man sinneth, he shall be pardoned; yet the Scripture useth no such langauge, and the form of wholsom words teacheth every man rather to speak thus, *If* I *be wicked, then woe unto me,*

If I *be righteous yet will* I *not lift up my head.*

These words stand in an elegant opposition against the former. Here are persons and states opposite: persons, *The wicked and the righteous, if* I *be wicked, if I be righteous*. States, *Woe, and lifting up of the head, if I be wicked, then woe unto me; if I be righteous then will I not lift up mine head.* He doth not say, if I be righteous I shall be happy, though that be a truth, but (which was more sutable to his purpose) *if* I *be righteous, yet will* I *not lift up my head.*

Some put this into a *dilemma*, or double argument, by which *Job* would aggravate the greatness of his affliction; as if he had said, *Let me look which way* I *will, my case is very sad, if* I *be wicked then woe be to me; if* I *be wicked yet* I *am so full of sorrows, that* I *am not able to hold up my head*; But I rather interpret this latter part of the verse, as a desciption of *Jobs* humility, in the best of his

his ſpiritual eſtate then as any aggravation of the illneſs of his temporall eſtate.

If I be righteous.

He ſpeaks not as if he doubted whether he were righteous or no. *Job* had ſhewed the ſetledneſs of his ſpirit in that aſſurance more then once before, but he puts the beſt of his caſe, to ſhew how low he was in his own thoughts, when he was at beſt. There is a two-fold righteouſneſs; Firſt, of Juſtification. Secondly, of Sanctification, of ſincerity or uprightneſs: and ſo his meaning is, Suppoſe I am ſuch, as *I* have aſſerted my ſelf to be, and as God himſelf hath teſtified to me to be, perfect and upright, yet *I will not lift up my head*; Some read, *I* cannot, others, *I* dare not lift up my head.

I will not lift up my head.

Not lift up thy head, *man*, if thou wert righteous? Why, who in the world ſhall lift up their heads, if the righteous ſhall not? Are there any that have ſuch cauſe to lift up their heads as they? He might ſay indeed, if *I* were rich, or if *I* were honourable, yet *I* will not lift up my head, theſe are things which cannot, and therefore ſhould not lift up any mans ſpirit an inch from the ground: but to ſay, if *I* were righteous, *I* would not lift up my head, ſeems a degradation or an abaſement of righteouſneſs. To clear this *I* ſhall open the phraſe a little.

To lift up the head of another man, is to advance him. Thus *Pharaoh lifted up the head of his chief Butler*, Gen. 40. 13. And the King of *Babylon lifted up the head of Jehojakin King of Judah, and brought him forth out of priſon*, Jer. 52. 21. In this ſenſe *David* calls God, *The lifter up of his head*, Pſal. 3. 3.

To lift up our own heads, is to prevail, and to get above preſſing evils victoriouſly, Judg. 8. 28. *Thus was Midian ſubdued before the children of Iſrael, ſo that they lifted up their heads no more*: that is, *Gideon* routed, and made ſo compleat a conqueſt over the *Midianites*, that they were totally broken, and could no more inſult over *Iſrael*. The victory of Chriſt over all our ſpiritual enemies, is thus deſcribed, *Pſal.* 110. 7. *He ſhall drink of the brook in the way*; that is, of the waters of affliction and ſorrow, which either the wrath of God, or the rage of men gave him to drink, while he was in the way of perfecting the work of our redemption; and

because he shall do this, *Therefore shall he lift up, his head*, that is, he shall prevail by his passion, and overcome by dying; yea, he shall overcome death by a triumphant resurrection.

Attollere caput notat gaudium & fiduciam. Coc.

Again, There is a two-fold lifting up of the head; First, a lifting up of the head with joy and consolation (*Luk.* 21.28.) Secondly, A lifting up of the head with pride and ostentation, *Psal.* 83.2. *Loe thine enemies make a tumult, and they that hate thee have lift up the head*; that is, they have proudly boasted and vaunted themselves. The latter is *Jobs* sense, *if I be righteous, I will not lift up my head* in pride; he might and he did lift up his head in joy, because he knew himself righteous.

Once more, there is a lifting up of our heads in our selves, and a lifting up of our heads in Christ. *Job* disclaims the former here, but he all along assumes the latter. We cannot lift up our heads too high in the thoughts of free grace, nor hang them down too low, in the thought of our own works.

Non levabo caput, h. e demisso capite ac mente coram te ambulabo.

Further, While *Job* saith, *I will not lift up my head*, he meaneth less then he speaketh. In Scripture there is sometimes less expressed then is intended, and sometimes more. That of the Apostle (1 *Cor.* 15. 58.) *Your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*, rises in sense higher then expression, our labour in the Lord shall not only not be in vain, but abundantly advantagious. This of *Job*, *I will not lift up my head*, falls in sense below his expression, for his meaning is, I will abase my self before God, I will be so far from priding my self, or walking (as the daughters of *Jerusalem* are described by the Prophet, *Isaiah* 3. 16.) with a *stretched forth neck*, that I will rather hang down my head.

Miseri et infælices capite demisso, et in terram dejecto ambulant. Sanct.

To hang or hold down the head, in Scripture noteth humbling and sorrow; when Christ bids his people lift up their heads with joy, because the time of their redemption was drawing nigh, it implied that their heads would hang down with sorrow, while that redemption was further off. The Jewish fasts are described (in part) by this posture of sorrow (Isa. 58. 5.) *Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bull-rush?* Times of fasting are times of mourning, and then (it seems) they used to hang down the head, as a sign of mourning.

Hence observe, *That a godly man, how upright and holy soever he is, walks humbly with God.*

The

The more holiness any soul hath, The more humility it hath. Humility is a great part of our holiness; much more then is it an argument of holiness. The Pharisee (*Luk.* 18.) who thought that he was righteous, lifted up his head full high, he would not lose an inch of his commendation, and therefore commends himself. He is his own reporter of what he had done, and who he was; but the poor Publican durst not lift up his eyes to heaven, his spirit hung down as well as his head, yet he was the righteous man, and went home justified rather then the other. It is the scope and design of the Gospel to make and keep us humble. God hath set up the way of saving us by faith, that he might take away boasting, and that no flesh might glory in his sight.

Secondly, If *Job* would not lift up his head, though righteous, what shall we judge of those, who lift up and carry their heads so high, though they are wicked? There is no reason any man should be proud of his goodness, what a madness then is it for wicked men to be proud of, or in their naughtiness!

Thirdly, Though *Job* was very thankfull for, and joyfull in, yet he durst not lift up his head, or be proud of the white robes and costly rayment of imputed righteousness. What then shall we say of them, who are proud of the dirty rags and filthy raiment of their own inherent righteousness? A godly man walketh tremblingly, lest he should offend, therefore he saith, *if I am wicked woe unto me*: and he walketh humbly when he doth not offend, therefore he saith, though I am righteous, yet I will not hold up my head. *Job* hath often breathed out the humility of his soul in former passages, therefore I shall not insist upon it here.

Saturitas hæc respicit animæ ventriculum, qui tantam ærumnarum copiam vix potuit concoquere.

I am full of confusion, therefore see thou mine affliction.

I am full.

That is, my mind is full. The spirit hath a stomack, or a capacious vessel for the receiving either of good or evil, of joy or sorrow. *Job*'s spirit had received in, as much evil and sorrow as ever it could hold, and more then he could well digest.

Pined.

קלה a קלון

Quod est crematre, ignominini enim efficit pudorem qui est πύρωσις τις in corde et in vultu sicut ignis.

I am full of confusion.

The word signifies shame and burning heat, because shame appeareth with a burning heat or blush in the face, which is also called confusion of face. Blushing puts the face into a flame. Some take confusion here for shame, rendering the text, *I am full*

Erubeſcentes vultus habent flammantes. Sanc.

full of ſhame, or ignominy: which ignominy might ariſe two wayes; either from that reproach which his friends caſt upon him, while they branded him for a wicked man, and an hypocrite, *I am full of reproach*; ſo full that *I* may juſtly be aſhamed, yea confounded, if *I* were ſuch as they deſcribe me. Or from that reproach which his afflictions caſt upon him. *Poverty* is no ſhame to a beggar, who was born poor, but poverty is a ſhame to a man who hath been rich, and lived in honour. The Original word holds this forth moſt properly, being oppoſed to that which ſignifies weightineſs and honour, becauſe honour is a weighty thing, as this ſignifies lightneſs and ſhame, becauſe ſhame is a light thing, or a thing of nought.

Our Tranſlatours rendering the word *confuſion*, ſeem to intend ſomewhat elſe beſides *ſhame*.

Confuſion notes a diſorder, and an uncompoſedneſs of ſpirit. When a man knows not what to do, or whoſe counſel to follow. When a man cannot make up his thoughts, or bring them to any iſſue: When the mind is like a skain of ravel'd ſilk, which will neither winde nor draw, then we are in confuſion. And this *I* conceive was it, which *Job* chiefly intends, when he ſaith, *I am full of confuſion.*

Hence obſerve,

Great ſorrows diſtract the minde, and bring a man to his wits end.

While we ſuffer much, we ſcarce know what to do. Trouble upon the ſenſitive part, troubles the underſtanding. Confuſion upon our eſtates, makes a confuſion in our mindes; it is very hard to keep our ſpirits in order, while our houſes and buſineſs are out of order: every affliction makes ſome confuſion without us; and it is exceeding rare if affliction make not much confuſion within us. *I* (ſaith *Job*) *am full of confuſion.*

See thou mine affliction.

עני *Eſt imbecillitas, maximè quæ eſt a majore vi vim ſupprimente, ſtatum miſerum ſuccumbentis notat.*

There is a two-fold ſight of affliction; Firſt, By a bare intuition, diſcerning it. Secondly, By a gracious compaſſion, delivering us from it. The former ſight God alwayes hath of all our afflictions, neither our ſins, nor our ſorrows can be hidden from him. The latter he ſometimes ſuſpends, and will not ſee, what he cannot but ſee. He will not ſee ſo as to releive, what he cannot but ſee ſo as to obſerve. It is this ſecond kinde of ſight, which

Job

Job entreats and prayes for here, *See thou my affliction*, that is, pity me in my affliction.

The word which we render affliction noteth weakneſs, and caſting down, or that weakneſs which ariſeth from caſting down, an oppreſſing affliction, which like ſome great weight lies heavy upon us.

There are different readings; ſome thus, *I am filled with affliction and ſee my ſorrows.* The Chaldee thus, *I will ſatiate my ſelf with ſhame, I will ſee my affliction.* Man ſeeth his affliction by feeling it. Sight which is the chief ſenſe, is put for any ſenſe. And ſo the meaning is, though I am righteous, yet I cannot hold up my head, or take any comfort becauſe I am ſo full of confuſion, and ſee ſo much affliction; As if he had ſaid, *Can a man at the ſame time mourn and rejoyce? Can a man lift up his head, while he hath ſuch a load upon his heart?*

Videt vexationem homo qui vexatur, videt Deus qui eam reſpicit & propitius eſt. Drus.

Hence obſerve,

They who ſee much affliction, can hardly take in any conſolation.

Come to a godly man, under great outward or inward troubles; tell him of the love of God, of the pardon of ſin, of an inheritance among the Saints in light, as his portion; you can hardly faſten any of theſe things upon him: ſorrow within, keeps comfort out. As till ſin be caſt out we cannot act holily: ſo till worldly ſorrow, or the exceſs of godly ſorrow be caſt out, we cannot act joyfully. The Saints in a right poſture of ſpirit, are joyous in all their tribulations; and Chriſt is able to make conſolations abound, as tribulation doth abound; yet where there is abundance of tribulation, conſolation is uſually very ſcarce. Drops will hardly be received, where rivers are offered and poured forth.

Satis habeas ignominiæ et vide impotentiam meam. Coc.

Another reading of the words, repreſenteth *Job* beſpeaking God in prayer, mixed with complaining, *If I were righteous, yet cannot I lift up my head, be thou ſatisfied with confuſion, and behold my affliction.* So *M. Broughton.* As if *Job* had ſaid, *Let it be enough, Lord, let it now ſuffice, give me ſome eaſe that I may lift up my head, a little before I lay it down for altogether.* Thus *David* prayed (*Pſ.* 39. 11, 12.) *When thou with rebukes doſt correct man for iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away like a moth, ſurely every man is vanity. O ſpare me that I may recover ſtrength, before I go hence and be no more.* When *Nehemiah* was humbling himſelf, and confeſſing his ſin, and the ſin of that people, he concludes according to this interpreta-

terpretation, (*Chap.* 9. 32.) *Let not all the trouble seem little before thee that hath come upon us, on our Kings, on our Princes, and on our Priests, and on all thy people*; as if he had said, Lord, consider that now we have been greatly punished, though we have been punished less then our sins deserve. Thou may'st justly inflict more, but we are not able to endure more.

Thirdly, We read imperatively, *Therefore see thou mine affliction*: So his meaning is, Lord, take notice of my sad condition, I am full of trouble.

Hence observe,

Rectius in imperativo, q. d. vide Domine quo sim statu tum cognosces ita esse ut dico. Merc.

That when sorrows are come to a great height, it is time for us to pray, that God would cast a compassionate eye upon them.

When we are past the cure and help of man, we are fittest objects for God. When the pressures of the people of *Israel* were greatly encreased in *Ægypt*, then the Lord himself saith, I *have seen*, I *have seen*, (Exod. 3. 7.) and when affliction is boyl'd up to the height, then let us say, *See Lord, See Lord.* When the rage and blasphemy of *Rabshakeh*, both by speaking and writing, reached even unto heaven, *Then Hezekiah went and spread the letter before the Lord* (2 King. 19. 14.) As if he had said, *Lord, do thou read this letter, Lord, bow down thine ear and hear, Lord, behold and see, we are full of confusion, See thou our affliction.* And when the enemies of the Jews in *Nehemiah's* time fell to scoffing and jearing the work they had in hand, and them in the work, then that zealous Governour puts it unto God, *Hear, O our God, for we are despised.*

Secondly, Note, *That when our afflictions are at the highest and greatest, then the Lord is able to master and subdue them.*

I *am full of confusion, see thou mine affliction*; as if he had said, it is in vain for me to shew my diseases and my wounds to creatures, I know I am not past thy cure, though I come thus late; or thus, I have shewed my wounds and my diseases to the creatures, I have made my moan to men, but they cannot help: Now I bring them unto thee, *O see my affliction.* All our ruines may be under the hand of God, he hath bread and cloathing for us, he can be our healer, when none can either in heaven or earth.

Lastly, Observe,

When our afflictions are at the highest, then usually God comes to deliver.

When

When the waters of affliction swell over the banks and threaten a deluge, then God turns the stream; when our sores fester, and are ready to gangrene, then God applies his balsome. He seldome appears in a business which others can do, or undertakes that which is mans work. As in the sore travel of women in childbearing, other helpers undertake it not, till (as they speak) it be past *womens work*; so God seldome meddles eminently (he acts alwayes concomitantly) till our deliverance is past *mans work*, that so the whole praise of the work may be his. When danger is upon the growing hand, then desire God to take deliverance in hand: Then pray, and pray earnestly, that God would see your afflictions when you perceive them to be encreasing afflictions. So it follows in the next verse. *See thou mine affliction.*

Vers. 16. *For it encreaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce Lyon, and again thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me.*

This verse with the next are an elegant and patheticall description of *Jobs* yet growing and prevailing sorrows: for having closed the 15*th* verse with an assertion and a petition, *I am full of confusion, therefore see thou mine affliction*, he presseth and pursueth both in these words, *For it encreaseth: Thou huntest me as a fierce Lyon.*

For it encreaseth.

גאה

In bonum, elevatus, eminuit, in malum, intumuit, superbiit de inanimatis crevit, auctus fuit.

M. *Broughton* renders, *How it fleeth up!* The Hebrew word is taken sometimes in a good, and sometimes in an ill sense. In a good sense it signifies to be lifted up, or to be eminent in excellency. In an ill sense, it signifies to be lifted up, or exalted with pride. The word is applied also to things without life, and then it signifies to augment by addition or encrease.

The Vulgar takes it in that *ill* sense, as noting pride and high-mindedness, translating by the *Noun*, thus, *For pride thou dost catch me as a Lyon:* or thou dost *hunt me as a Lyon, because I am proud.* A Lyon is a stout creature, and may be an embleme of pride.

Another gives a sense near that. *When it lifteth up it self, then thou huntest me as a fierce Lyon.* When what lifteth up it self? when my head lifteth up it self; he had said in the former verse, *If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head, for if I do lift up my head in pride, then thou wilt hunt me as a fierce Lyon*, I shall be sure

to

to smart for every proud thought and high imiginati on. Both these translations render the meaning of *Job* thus, *If I should plead my own righteousness and innocency before thee, as thinking therein to lift up my head, and so should wax confident in my self, I shall presently pay for it, for I perceive that thou art preparing thine instruments against me, as men do against fierce Lyons, and wild savage beasts, to hunt catch and destroy me.* Here is a truth in *thesi, God doth resist the proud*; if any head lifteth it self up against God, God can quickly lay such an head as low as the ground. But, in *Hypothesi*, or in *Jobs* case, I cannot assent to it, as a truth suting this Text.

A third Translation puts it in by an Interrogation, *I am full of confusion, see thou mine affliction, Can it be lifted up?* That is, Can my head be lifted up, when I am so full of sorrow and confusion? whatsoever my righteousness is, I am not in case now to stand upon it, 'tis no time for me to talk great words; Can I lift up mine head when thou press'st me with such a weight of affliction? *Great afflictions will keep down the greatest spirits, or break them down.* Affliction will make the stoutest heart stoop, and the highest head to bow.

But take the word according to our reading, as it referreth to his afflictions; *it encreaseth*, that is, my affliction encreaseth, and so a double exposition is given.

First, As if *Job* had spoken his wish or desire, *I am* (said he before) *full of confusion, see thou mine affliction, O that mine affliction might encrease, and that I might be fuller of confusion! O that my troubles might be strengthned upon me, and that I might be weak enough to see an end of my troubles, I am yet too strong for death, O that thou wouldst quickly dispatch me, more weight, deeper wounds, harder blows would be welcome.* As if here again *Job* had assumed and renewed that complaining desire mentioned (*Chap. 6. 7, 8.*) *O that I might have my request! and that God would grant the thing that I long for!* (what was that?) *Even that it would please God to destroy me, that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!* But *I* shall let this pass; *Job* hath spoken these wishes plainly and in the letter too often; *I* will not charge him with another from a questionable interpretation.

Rather take the words declaratively, not for a wish of greater future afflictions, but for a manifestation of the greatness of his present afflictions: so we express them, *I am full of confusion,*

See

See thou mine affliction, for it encreaseth. This is a clear and a fair sense: *Job* intending to describe his estate more fully, sheweth it still upon the encrease, waxing worse and worse, greater and greater. As if he had said, mine are a pile or heap of afflictions, and still more are piled, and heaped on.

Effert sese afflictio mea. Eleganti autem figura dicit, quod sese efferat. Elationem et superbiam morbo et dolori tribuit, cum totum hominem possidet. Merc.

There is an elegancy in it, as taking in the other sense, for pride or lifting up. See my affliction, *it waxeth proud.* For as the waves of the sea are called proud waves, when they swell and encrease: So an affliction encreasing and swelling may be called a proud affliction. Some afflictions like a great sea rise above us, and stand over us; or like a cruel master domineer and insult upon us. *Job's* afflictions were proud ones, they came upon him with a kinde of authority, as if they would lay him at their very feet. Hence observe,

They who have endured very great afflictions, may yet finde their afflictions greatning and encreasing.

He had said before, *I am full of confusion*, and yet here he saith, *my affliction encreaseth.* When we have as much as we think our backs can bear, yet (possibly) more weight may be laid on. When we hope our affliction is upon the declining hand, that those waters are at an ebbe, and the fire slacking, then they may flow higher, and the Furnace may be heated seven times hotter then before. The Lord threatneth obstinate and rebellious sinners (*Levit.* 26.) I *will punish you yet seven times more for your sins*: Though I have brought such calamities upon you, that ye have been ready to say, surely, now God hath done his worst, we are in as bad a case as we can be; no, saith the Lord (who hath infinite wisdome to finde out wayes of afflicting, as well as of shewing mercy) I *will punish you yet seven times more for your sins*; *no man knowes how much more God can punish him*; his judgements in the executing of them, as well as in the laying of them, are past finding out. We know not the beginning of them, neither do we know when they will end. Now as the Lord afflicteth some seven times more for the punishment of their sins, so others seven times more for the tryall of their graces: sufferings are sent in perfection, to make us more perfect thorow sufferings; afflictions swell with pride, to abate the swellings of our pride, or to shew how those swellings are abated into humility. God hath unsearchable riches and treasures of chastenings, as well as of wrath or of love. And as when we think we have received as

much mercy as God can give us, he can yet give us more, and make our mercies seven-fold greater to our apprehensions then before; so also he can dispense himself in the matter of affliction.

For it encreaseth.

This encrease is set forth by an elegant similitude. Though similitudes prove nothing, yet they much illustrate what is already proved.

Thou hunteſt me as a fierce Lyon.

Thou hunteſt me as the ramping Shakall: So Mr. *Broughton*. The word *Shakall*, signifies a fierce assaulting Lyon; or, as we speak, a Lyon *rampant*. Some translate a *Lyoneſs*, others a *Leopard*, spoken of in the fourth Chapter. We may take it in general for any fierce, cruel and savage beast, of the one kind or of the other.

Thou hunteſt me as a fierce Lyon] For *Thou*, some render (*it*) referring to his affliction, *For it encreaseth, and it hunteth me* (my affliction hunteth me) *as a fierce Lyon*. Sorrows are compared to a fierce Lyon. Afflictions hunt and follow, they tear and destroy like a wild beast. *Like as a Lyon, or like the young Lyon roaring on his prey* (as the Prophet speaks, *Isa.* 45.) *When a multitude of shepheards is called out against him* (Christ is compared to such a Lion there) *will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them*: Such were the afflictions of distressed, despised *Job*, they braved him to his very face, and would not with-draw or turn away from him, notwithstanding all the out-cryes and loudest lamentations which he made against them.

Effert se dolor meus ut leo, nequaquam cedens. Merc.

Capior sicut leo ad occisionem. Tendis mihi & expandis rete, non secus ac ad feram capiendam. Rab. Sal. *Quidam referunt ad prioris status felicitatem, nam superbum et imperiosum animal leo est regia; potentiæ symbolum.*

Secondly, The comparison is laid between the Lyon and *Job*, *Thou hunteſt me as if I were a Lyon*: So divers of the Ancients, and the Septuagint understand it; *I am taken or catched like a Lyon*; as if *Job* had said, *Lord, Thou uſeſt me as a wild beast, thou hunteſt me as thou wouldeſt hunt a lyon or a bear, thou ſetteſt nets and toils, thou makeſt ſnares and pits* (as *Nimrods* do in the hunting of Lyons, and other wild beasts) thou dealest with me, as if there were no taking, no taming of me, but by severest and roughest wayes: thou dealest with me, as if in my prosperity I had been like a fierce Lyon, oppressing and preying upon the poor; or, as if in my affliction I had provoked thee to resolve, that thou wilt

wilt never leave off to afflict me; till thou hast destroyed me. *Thou huntest me as a fierce Lyon,* How are they hunted? Lyons are not usually hunted to be preserved, 'tis rare to hunt Lyons so, but because they are hurtfull and destroying creatures, therefore they are hunted that they may be destroyed, and do no more hurt; as if he had thus expressed himself, Thou, Lord seemest to adjudge me not only as an unusefull and unserviceable creature, but also as a dangerous and a noxious creature, as a *naturall bruit beast made to be taken and destroyed* (2 Pet. 2. 12.) yet I cannot assent that *Job* (though under the darkness of a sore temptation) had such dark thoughts of God, as if he had no other end in afflicting him, but to make an end of him.

Non captior ad vitam, ut animalia quæ solent haberi in deliciis. Bold.

I rather expound him in a third sense, that the comparison is made between God and the Lyon; *Thou, O God, like a Lyon, dost hunt me.* Consent of Scripture is clearest for this interpretation, which often represents God in afflicting his people under the notion of a Lyon, as will appear in the proof of the observation arising from it; which is,

That the Lord seemeth sometimes to put off all pity and compassion towards his people.

So the Church complains (*Lam.* 3. 10.) *He was unto me as a bear lying in wait, and as a Lyon in secret places.* God threatned by the Prophet *Hosea* (Chap. 5. 14.) *I will be unto Ephraim a Lyon, and as a young Lyon to the house of Judah, I, even I, will tear and go away.* I will afflict them fiercely and terribly. Again (*Hos.* 13. 7.) *I will be unto them as a Lyon, as a leopard by the will I observe them. Hezekiah* speaks the same language (*Isa.* 38. 13.) *I reckoned till morning, that as a Lyon, so will he break all my bones.* As when man dealeth cruelly with his brother, he is a wolf to him, or a lyon to him (*Psal.* 17. 12.) (Mans acting of beastly lusts, is all the metamorphosis or change of men into beasts, which Heathen Poets have so much fancied, or the holy Scriptures so often mentioned.) Now, I say, as man acting cruelly upon man, is called a Lyon, so also is God. When God would shew the abatements of his wrath, then he saith, I *am God, and not man,* (Hos. 11: 8, 9.) *How shall I give thee up Ephraim?* &c. Thus he debates, by and by he votes and resolves negatively, *I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger: I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God, and not man.* But when he would shew the highest workings of his wrath, then he denies to shew himself so much as man:

Thus old *Babylon* and *Chaldea* are terrified, *Isa.* 47. 1. *Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon*, &c. Why so? *Babylon* had set so long upon a throne, that she knew not how to think of sitting in the dust, yet she must; for *verse* 3. *I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man*: How then? I will meet thee as if I were a beast, or Lyon, Thou shalt finde no kinde of humanity at all from me, not only not the kindnesses and mercies of a God, but not so much as the kindness and mercy of a man. Thus the Lord met with that literall *Babylon*, and so at last he will meet with *mystical Babylon*. And as he will be to all his proud enemies, a destroying and devouring Lyon: so he appeareth often to his own people, he saith even to *Jerusalem*, and to *Zion*, I will not meet you as a man, when *you are carnall and walk as men*. The usual dealings of God with his people are full of compassion, *In measure (peck, peck) when it shooteth (or when thou sendest it) forth, thou wilt debate with it, He stayeth his rough winde in the day of the East-winde* Isa. 27. 8. He will not bluster against, and storm his people, when their enemies storm against them; he also measures out their afflictions, and marks what is fit and proportionate to their strength, and for their good, as a Physitian measures and weighs all the ingredients, which he mingles in a potion for his sick Patient: so the next words intimate, *By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin.* Yet at another time he afflicteth without measure, as if he intended to kill rather then to cure, and take away their lives, rather then to take away their sins. I grant his greatest afflictions are as exactly measured and weighed as the least. God knows to an hairs breadth, the length, and bredth, and to a graine the weight and burden of the longest, broadest, and weightiest affliction: but when he afflicts greatly, he is said to afflict without measure, because things unmeasurable, or which cannot easily be measured, are very great. And if ever the Lord afflicted any of his (in this sense) without measure, surely he afflicted *Job* so, who thus cries out, *Thou hunteſt me like a fierce Lyon.*

ושוב

Et redit, licet aliquantisper remittat tamen statim redit, &c.

And again thou shewest thy self marvellous (or wonderfull upon me.)

Again.

We render it as an *Adverb*; others, as a *Verb*, *Thou returnest, and shewest thy self wonderfull upon me.* The sense is the same in both

both, noting the continued or repeated acts of his affliction. Thou art still and still wonderfull against me; as if *Job* had said, *Lord, Thou no sooner ceasest, but thou beginnest again, thou no sooner takest off thy hand, but I feel it again; if thou grantest me a little breathing, and withdrawest from me, thou returnest again; if thou givest over the chase a while, thou pursuest it again, with as loud a cry, with as fierce assaults as ever; my sorrows know no intermission, my pains know not only no period, but no pause, I have storm upon storm, grief upon greif, here much and there much, I am alwayes and every where again afflicted, though already half dead with affliction.*

Una vice post aliam Ab. Ezr. Iterum iterumq; ostendis miranda tua facta in me. Drus. *In me non caret emphasi, q. d. in me jam sene mortuo et pene confecto.* Merc.

Whence observe.

God doth often renew the sore, or send new afflictions upon his choiceest servants.

One would think that light should follow darkness, and day succeed the night, that though sorow continue all the night, yet joy should come in the mourning, that after wounding we should have healing, and after sickness, health. So they promised themselves (*Hos.* 6. 1.) *Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us, he hath smitten, and he will binde us up*: yet many have felt, wounding after wounds, and smiting after blows; darkness hath stept after darkness, and their sorrow hath had a succession of greater sorrows. It was a speciall favour to *Paul*, when *Epaphroditus* was restored (Phil. 2. 27.) *He was sick nigh unto death, but* (saith he) *God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also*; and why? *Lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.* God would not do what some of his enemies thought to do, *add affliction to his bonds*; therefore he healed *Pauls* helper, and kept him alive, in whom he so much delighted. *Sorrow upon sorrow is a mournful bearing, yet many a precious Saint hath born that coat.* The promise to the Church is, *That her peace shall be as a river, and her prosperity as the waves of the Sea*, Isa. 66. 12. When the Church shall come to her full beauty, and attain a perfect restauration, then her peace shall be a continued peace, she shall have peace upon peace, everlasting successions of peace; a river being supplied, and fed with a constant stream, the waters that flow to day, will flow again to morrow; peace like a river is *peace, peace*, or perpetual peace. *Sions* peace shall not be as a *land-flood*, soon up, and as soon down again, but as a *river*, and (which yet heightens it) *her prosperity shall be as the waves of the sea.* If the winde do but stir upon the face of the sea, you shall have

have wave upon wave, waves rolling and riding one upon the back of another. Such shall be the prosperity of *Zion* on earth for a time, and it will be for ever in heaven: there peace shall be as a river to eternity, and prosperity as the waves of the sea, joy upon joy, and comfort upon comfort, riding and rolling one upon the back of another. As it shall be thus with the peace of the Church at last; so it may be with the afflictions of the Church, or of any member of the Church at present. Their afflictions may be as a river, and their sorrows as the waves of the sea, coming on again and again, renewed as often as abated.

תתפלאבי
Mirabilis sis in me.

Again, thou shewest thy self wonderfull, or *marvellous against,* or *upon me.*

Both rendrings are consistent with the originall.

Marvellous upon me.

That is, thou dost not punish or afflict me in an ordinary way. Marvels are not every dayes work. Thou takest a new, a strange course to try me: such afflictions as mine have no parallel, such have scarce been heard of, or recorded in the history of any age. Who hath heard of such a thing as this? thou seemest to design me for a president to posterity, or to shew in my example what thou canst do upon a creature, *Thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me.* As *Moses* speaks concerning *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, when they murmured, and mutined against him, and against *Aaron*, *If these men dye the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me; but if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, then,* &c. The Lord to manifest his extream displeasure against those mutineers, did (as it were) devise a new kinde of death for them, *If these men die the common or the ordinary death of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me;* These men have given a new example of sin, and surely God will make them a new example of punishment. *Job* speaks the same sense, *Thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me;* thou wilt not be satisfied in afflicting me after the rate or measure of other men; all the Saints should do some singular thing, and many of them suffer some singular thing. The Apostle assures his *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you, but that which is common to man.* *Job* seems to speak the contrary. A temptation hath taken me, which is not common to man.

Mirificum sit spectaculum homo, qui tam dira patitur tam constanti invicto animo.

Further,

Further, These words, *Thou art marvellous upon me*, have reference to God who sent those afflictions, as well as unto the afflictions which he sent; as if he had said, Lord, thou actest now besides thy nature and thy custome; thou art mercifull, and thou delightest in mercy; thou art good, and thou doest good; how or whence is it then, that thou art so fierce against me, and pourest out so many evils upon me? I could not (knowing thee as I do) have beleived, though it had been told me, that thou wouldest have been so rigorous and incompassionate; if a professed enemy had done this, he had done like himself, and had been no wonder unto me; but now as thou hast afflicted me, till I am become a wonder unto many, so thou, O Lord, art become a wonder unto me, and to all who hear how thou hast afflicted me. Meek *Moses* made himself a wonder, when he broke out in anger. Every man is wondered at, when he doth that which he is not enclined to doe, or uot used to do. Is it not a wonder to see the patient God angry, the mercifull God severe, the compassionate God inexorable? Thus, saith *Job*, *Thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me.*

Hence observe.

First, *That some afflictions of the Saints are wonderfull afflictions.*

As God doth ~~not~~ often send his people strange deliverances, and works wonders to preserve them; so he sends them many strange afflictions, and works wonders to trouble them. And as many punishments of sin upon wicked men, so some tryals of grace upon godly men are very wonderfull. The Lord threatneth the Jews (*Deut.* 28. 59.) that he would *make their plagues wonderfull*, he would make strange work among them. And he saith of *Jerusalem*, *I will wipe it, as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down, or wiping it and turning it upon the face thereof*, (2 Kings 21. 13.) To see a great City handled like a little dish, or a strong Nation turned topsie turvy (as we say) or the bottome upwards, is a strange thing. It is an ordinary thing to see Cups and Platters turned up-side down, but it is not ordinary to see Kingdoms and Nations turned up-side down. To wipe *Jerusalem* as a dish, was to do that which was never done before. Some expound that place of the frequency of affliction, that God would smite them again and again; as they that make clean a dish, wipe it over and over, that no filth may stay in it. The Seventy and the Vul-

Delebo Jerusalem sicut deleri solent tabulæ. Vulg.

Vulgar translate, *I will blot out Jerusalem as they use to blot out a table-book that is written all over*, He that hath a table-book full of writing, and would write more, takes a cloth or a spunge, and blotteth out what was written: and that he may thorowly wipe his table-book, he rubs it often with his spunge, to get the letters clear out. Thus God threatned to do with *Jerusalem*, *He would wipe, or blot out*, her golden characters and honourable inscriptions, till nothing of *Jerusalem* but her shame, and her sin should remain unblotted out. Was not the judgement brought upon *Jerusalem* a wonder? when the Prophet saith (*Lam.* 4. 12.) *The Kings of the earth and all the inhabitants of the world would not have beleived it.* The Apostle speaks thus of his own, and of his fellow Apostles afflictions (1 *Cor.* 4. 9.) *We are made a spectacle* (as upon a theatre) *unto the world, and to Angles, and to men.* All begin to wonder at us, what the matter is, what strange creatures we are, whom the Lord suffers to be thus used. The people of God are often a gazing stock to the world in regard of what they do, and not seldome in regard of what they suffer.

Secondly, observe,

That when God doth greatly afflict his own people, he goes out of his ordinary way.

He shews himself marvellous or wonderfull: a man is never marvelled at when he goes his old pace in his old path. God loves to have his hand in the honey-pot, therefore it is strange to see him give his people a bitter cup to drink, or feeding them with wormwood and with gall. Judgement is the strange work of God (*Isa.* 28. 21.) *The Lord shall be wrath in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act.* And if every work of judgement be his strange work, a work he delighteth not to be conversant in, what then are great and sore judgements? Though the Lord be infinitely pleased in the executions of judgement, yet because (if a *more* may be conceived in infinity) he is more pleased with mercy, therefore judgement is called his *strange work, his strange act.* To see a Prince renowned for clemency and pity, passing a severe sentence, is a strange sight. We say he hath shewed himself marvellous, he hath gone against both his practice and his nature, his custome and his inclination. To see any man do what he useth not, hath somewhat of wonder in it; much more to see God do so. When he taketh up his rod we begin to start, how much more

when

when he taketh up his ſword, when he hunts thoſe like a Lyon, whom he dearly loveth, and uſeth thoſe as wilde beaſts, who are his precious children; when he ſmites them with rigour, whom he carrieth in his own boſome. Theſe, theſe are acts which repreſent him to admiration: as many acts of his power and mercy, cauſe the Saints to cry out, admiringly, yet joyfully, *Who is a God like unto thee?* So ſome acts of his viſible ſeverity cauſe others of them to cry out admiringly, yet ſorrowfully, Why, O God, doſt thou act, in appearance, ſo unlike thy ſelf?

Verſe. 17. *Thou reneweſt thy witneſſes againſt me (or thou bringeſt new witneſſes againſt me) and encreaſeth thine indignation upon me; changes and war are againſt me.*

This 17*th* verſe is but a further amplification of what he had ſpoken before, ſetting forth the greatneſs and frequent returns of his trouble.

Thou reneweſt.

The firſt day of the moneth is called *Chodeſh* in the Hebrew from the word here uſed, becauſe then there was a *new Moon*, or a change of the Moon; ſo, *Thou reneweſt*, thou makeſt a change, I have many new Moons, but they are all and always at *full* in ſorrow. *Thou reneweſt*

Chodeſh *novilunium, primus dies menſis, quo quaſi luna in novatur.*

Thy Witneſſes.

The Septuagint ſaith, *Thy examinations*; ſo it is an alluſion to the tryall of a malefactour, who is examined by the Judge, and if he deals not plainly in confeſſion, then his examination is renewed. Thus, ſaith *Job*, thou ſendeſt (as it were) new examiners with more articles and additionall Interrogatories, as if I had conceal'd ſomewhat, and had not told thee my whole heart.

We tranſlate (and ſo the word moſt properly beareth) *witneſſes*; the ſenſe is the ſame. As ſome malefactours are often examined, ſo more evidence and new witneſſes are brought againſt them: though in the mouth of two or three witneſſes, every word ſhall be eſtabliſhed, yet where there are more witneſſes then two or three, there is more eſtabliſhment.

Again, As they who are of a wrangling and unquiet diſpoſition, will never ſit down in a ſuit; when by the examination of ſome witneſſes, they have brought the matter to a tryall, and are

Non tam videtur de instauratione plurium testium queri, quam de sententiæ ferendæ dilatione & morâ. Pined.

cast, yet this doth not satisfie them, they will have their writ of errour, and bring the matter about again, in another Court. Thus (saith *Job*) as if the Lord were resolved, this sute should never have an end, *He reneweth his witnesses against me.* When I think all is concluded and agreed between us, I am as much to seek as ever: he brings all about again. So that after all my travel, I am as far from an end, as I was at the beginning, I am where I was, and am like to continue there, for I see the Lord *renewing his witnesses against me still.*

The doubt is, What or whom he meaneth by these Witnesses?

Philippus in *Io.*

One saith, these witnesses were devils. Satan accused him at first, and he is not alone, either in tempting or accusing, he can soon have a legion to joyn with him in any design of wickedness. But I pass that opinion.

Secondly, Others say, The Witnesses were *Jobs* three friends, they all testified against him, *Eliphaz* began, and *Bildad* was his second, *Zophar* stood ready to follow; all against *Job*.

Pœna unius peccati, quasi de statione decedentis, aliam quasi succenturiatam suffecturus es. Coc.

Thirdly, By witnesses, most (and they most clearly) understand his afflictions, *Thou reneweſt thy witneſſes*; that is, thou bringest new troubles to testifie against me. When one affliction hath spoken at thy bar against me, thou calleſt for the testimony of another, and of another, and when there will not be another, I know not, unless it be, when I am not. When *Naomi* was become *Marah*, (her former pleasures being turned into bitterness) she saith (*Ruth*, 1. 21.) *The Lord hath testified against me.* *Job* is very expres in the point at the sixteenth Chapter of this book, and the eight verse, which may be a Commentary upon this. *Thou hast filled me with wrinckles, which is a witness against me: and my leanness rising up in me, beareth witness to my face.* Afflictions bring in evidence, and testifie many wayes.

They sometimes witness for us, evidencing our graces, our faith, patience, sincerity and submission to the hand of God, they are witnesses also of our adoption or Spiritual sonship (*Heb.* 12. 8.) *If you be without chastisement whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.* It is no good sign to be free from sufferings. *Hear ye the rod*, saith the Prophet *Micah*: as we ought to hear it, calling us from sin: so we may hear it calling us sons. Chastenings speak our priviledges, as well as our duties.

They often witnesses against us;

First,

Firſt, That ſin is ſeated in us, and hath been acted by us. If we had no ſin, we ſhould know no ſorrow. Though ſome afflictions are not ſent out directly againſt ſin, yet every affliction is both a conſequent and a teſtimony of remaining ſin. The bundle of rods at our backs, ſaith, there is folly and ſin bound up in our hearts: and when once we are purged from all ſin, we ſhall hear no more of any affliction, of any rod. We ſhall be paſt ſuffering, as ſoon as we are paſt ſinning.

Secondly, They are witneſſes in ſpeciall, of that great ſin, the pride of our hearts and lives. If there were not ſwelling and impoſtumations of pride in our ſpirits, we ſhould not feel ſuch lancings. *Paul* himſelf acknowledges that they were growing upon him, if God had not taken a ſevere courſe to keep them down, *Leſt I ſhould be exalted above meaſure, through the abundance of revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the fleſh, the meſſenger of Satan to buffet me* (2. Cor. 12. 7.) Hence afflictions are called humiliations, both becauſe an afflicted perſon is humbled, or laid low by the hand of God, as alſo becauſe afflictions are ſent to humble, and lay us low in our ſelves. Now, if one ſpeciall buſineſs which affliction hath with us, be to humble us, then doubtleſs affliction witneſſeth that there is pride in us. That which is ſent to remove an evil, ſhews the preſence of it.

Thirdly, They are witneſſes, by bringing to our remembrance the acting of forgotten ſins. Affliction is a help to memory. That which we forget we have done or ſpoken, witneſſes coming in, make us remember; ſo alſo do our troubles. When the brethren of *Joſeph* had been put in ward three dayes, and heard him demand one of them to be left, as an hoſtage in priſon, till they brought *Benjamin*: This diſtreſs cauſed them to ſay, *We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we ſaw the anguiſh of his ſoul, when he beſought us, and we would not hear, therefore is this diſtreſs come upon us* (Gen. 42. 21.) The guilt of that ſin was about twenty years old, but they felt not the ſmart of it, till themſelvs ſmarted for it; their impriſonment ſet their memories at liberty, and when they ſaw themſelves in danger to become bondmen to the *Ægyptians*, they had witneſs enough of their ſelling *Joſeph* for a captive to the *Iſhmaelites*.

Fourthly, Afflictions witneſs obſtinacy and reſolvedneſs in the wayes of ſin, or, that afflicted perſons or Nations turn not for ſin. Every wound will open its mouth as a witneſs, and

every stroak will bring an evidence against the impenitent. The troubles which God brought upon *Ahaz* witnessed emphatically (2 *Chron.* 28. 22.) *This is that King Ahaz, who in the time of his distress, did trespass yet more against the Lord.* If we are not bettered by our distresses, our distresses testifie that we are naught, how much more when we are worse in our distress? As all good things which we have received, so all evills which we have suffered, will rise up in judgement against those who still continue evil.

Fiftly, Afflictions witness two things concerning God: First, that he hath an eye upon us, and care of us. He will not let us want any thing that is needfull for us, no not affliction. Due chastisement given a childe, is an argument that his father loveth him, and looks to him. Secondly, They are witnesses of Gods fatherly displeasure. Some say, God cannot be displeased with his children, because his love is everlasting. But will any man say, A father doth not love his childe, because he corrects him? yet a father never correcteth his childe, but when he is displeased with him: Parents may not strike unprovoked, and 'tis rare that God doth so. A man may be much displeased with, and much love the same person at the same time, and 'tis very usual for God to do so. Afflictions never testifie any the least hatred of God against his people, but they often testifie some, and sometimes great displeasure against his people.

Lastly, Afflictions upon the godly are reckoned very sufficient and credible witnesses by the world, that either they are not godly, or that surely some great ungodliness hath been acted by them. How many precious men have been cast upon this evidence, for traitors and rebels against God. *Job*'s friends took this for proof enough that he was wicked. They could not be perswaded he was good, because he endured so many evils, as the high Priest cried out against Christ, what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy; so said *Jobs* friends concerning him, what need have we offurther witness? Behold we have seen his misery. What do these losses in his estate, and ruines upon his family? What do these sores upon his body, and sorrows in his soul, but publish unto us (what he hath kept close and concealed) the prophaneness of his spirit, and the hypocrisie of his former profession. *Job* perceiving his friends making use all along of this proof, as of their chiefest and strongest

medium,

medium, might wel complain to God, upon the renewall of every dayes affliction; *Thou renewest thy witnesses against me.*

And encreasest thine indignation upon me, or, *thy indignation encreaseth upon me.*

In the beginning of the verse his own afflictions did encrease, but here the indignation of God. Indignation is more greivous then affliction, and the indignation of God is the most greivous indignation.

The word siguifies wrath, displeasure, fierce, fiery wrath, hot consuming displeasure. כעש

Increaseth.

There is a double increase here noted. First, Extensive. Secondly, Intensive; an increase both in multitude and magnitude; as if he had said, I have more troubles in number, and more in weight. רב

Indignation is here put for the effects of indignation; neither the wrath, nor the love of God do ever encrease in him, but in their exertions or in the putting of them forth towards us.

Observe from it,

First, *That a godly man may conceive himself under the indignation of God.*

The Church stoops to it (*Mic.* 7. 9.) I *will bear the indignation of the Lord, because* I *have sinned against him.*

Secondly Observe,

That the more we see of the indignation of God in any affliction, the sorer is the affliction.

As the love and smiles of God comfort the Saints more then all the outward comforts he heaps upon them; a little with much sensible love, is to us huge mercy. So the disfavour and frowns of God, trouble the Saints more then all the troubles, which he heaps upon them. A little with much sensible disfavour, is to us a heavy cross. Let trouble increase, yet if displeasure abate, the spirit of a man will bear and stand under it, though his flesh and outward man fall under it. Though the furnace should be heated seven times hotter, yet if the Lord do but let down one beam or ray of his love into the soul, all that burning fire will be but like a warm Sun. But when the scorchings of indignation mingle with affliction, this is dreadfull. *The anger of a fool* (saith *Solomon*)

is very heavy; yet that is not so much as a feather to a milstone or a mountain, compared with the anger of God. And though believers are freed from that anger and indignation which he darts upon his enemies, yet they to sense, yea & to their present opinion, may be dealt with as enemies. And though the indignation which God pours upon his own people, and that upon the wicked, be as different as their states are; yet the one may be under as much temporary pain and sorrow as the other is. For as an hypocrite may for a time taste as much of the goodness of God, and feel as much joy in his service, and sometimes more, then a man who is godly and sincere, so also may one who is godly and sincere, taste more of the displeasure of God for a time, and feel as much sorrow in his sufferings, and sometimes more, then a wicked man.

Job concludes with the same thing, in a different habit of words. *Changes and war are against me.* I have variety of afflictions, a multitude of afflictions, and afflictions in their strength, these three things are implied in those two words, *Changes and war*; he had variety of afflictions, for *changes were upon him.* He had many and strong afflictions, *For war was upon him.* One strong man cannot make a war, nor many weak ones. And it is as strange that this should be called a war, which was but against one weak man. The *Roman* stories cry up the honour of a man, who alone upon a narrow pass made a stand against a whole army, till supplies came, what shall we then say of *Job*, who single and alone maintained his standing against many armies, and held out a long war? *Changes and war are upon me.*

Pœnæ militant in me. Vulg.

חלפ *Excidere, quod exciditur immutatur à statu suo.*

עדא *Est tempus quoquis instatione aut militari officio est.*

The first word which signifies *changes*, signifies also destruction or cutting off. Some render it so here, *excision or cutting off* (by which he meaneth death) *is upon me.* The other word which we translate *war*, noteth also a set or an appointed time, as was shewed at the first verse of the 7th Chapter, *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?* So some translate it here, putting all together thus, *Excision* (or death, the cause being put for the effect) *is upon me and determined time of my life.*

Citra hos tantos dolores mihi certum tempus est prescriptum, intra quod sum moriturus. Merc.

M. *Broughton* translates, *Changes and stayed army have I.* Taking in both interpretations of the word, so his sense may be expressed in this tenour, *Lord, have not I a setled and determined time to die? Why then are such extream afflictions prepared against, and charged upon me, as if by these thou wouldest hasten my death, and*

bring

bring me to my grave sooner then thou thy self hast appointed? I shall dye at the time thou hast determined, though thou shouldest not distress my life, and even force out my breath with such pressing extremities.

Further, Taking the latter word for a prescribed time: some conceive *Job* carrying an allusion to those who are surprized with feavers and agues: they have changes, some well dayes, and some sick dayes, yet the fever returns upon a set time, or in a constant recourse, till the distemper is checked; As if he had said, *My afflictions are like feaver fits; though I have some intermission, yet I finde a regression, the fit comes upon me again; Changes, at set times are upon me.* *Hanc sensum amplectuntur, Aben. Ezra. Rab. Sal.*

But rather, according to the letter of our translation, *Changes and war are against me*, that is, *I am exercised with variety of wars.* The word imports any kinde of change, change of times or change of things, it signifies also change of garments (*Judg.* 14. 12.) That notion of the word, hath an elegancy in it in reference to *Job's* condition. He was a man cloathed with affliction, sorrow encompassed him as a long mourning cloak, and *Job* had changes of this raiment, he went not always in one sute, though his sutes were still of one colour, for he went alwayes in *blacks*. *Exerceor contrariis & inter se compugnantibus malis vel potius variis & sibi invicem succedentibus malorum agminibus.* Merc.

Again, We may interpret this change, of his change from one estate to another, from joy to sorrows, from peace to trouble, from plenty to want, from costly robes to filthy rags. Time was when *Job* went in scarlet, and fine linnen, and, if he pleased, might have fared deliciously every day; but when he spake this, he was in another state and habit, cloathed with sackcloth, and lying in the dust. It is said of wicked men (*Psal.* 55.9.) *Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.* Every creature is subject to change, and hath some changes every day; God only is unchangeable. Yet some men seem to have *no changes*, & though they cannot be free from natural changes one moment, yet they may be free from many years civil changes: they may be so far from such changes as *Job* felt, from good to evil, that all the changes they are acquainted with, may be only from good to better, from strong to stronger, from rich to richer: that's the intent of the *Psalm*; *they have no changes* from joy to sorrow, from health to sickness, from riches to poverty, from honour to disgrace, *Therefore they fear not God*; their hearts were hardened, because their estates prospered. *πανκτίσεν τρεπτὸν.*

So then, these changes import, either divers sorts of afflictions,

or

or divers returns and charges of the same afflict ions. The second word carrieth that allusion, *Changes, and war are upon me*; that is, such changes as there is in war, when first one regiment charges, and another seconds, and so regiment after regiment, company after company, file after file, now the right wing, and then the left, at last the reserve. Thus the Lord seemed to bring up his bands and troops of afflictions to assault *Job* in turns and changes, till his whole army had assaulted and skirmished with him. Those military terms of shooting and warring, are frequent figures in Scripture, shewing how God conflicts with sinfull, weak man, after the manner of men. Observe hence,

Agmen quiddam malorum, ut etiam dicitur, lenna vel Ilias malorum. Merc.

Vexationes turmatim me invadunt. Drus.

Sagitandi et militandi verba sæpe et eleganter in scripturis declarant Dei contra impios per flagella conflictum

First, *That afflictions are at the command of God.*

He marshals and disposes them, as armies are by their Generals in times of war. He can say to one affliction, as the Centurion to his souldiers, Go, and it goeth, to another, Come, and it cometh, to a third, do this, and it doth it. All armies of sorrow are led by God in chief. They charge whom he pleaseth, and where he pleaseth, high or low, person or nation: if he gives the word, they fall on presently, nor will they return till he orders their retreat.

Secondly, Note, *That the Lord hath variety of wayes and means to afflict and try his people.*

Changes and war are against me. The Physitian hath variety of medicines for his sick patient; if one removes not the distemper, he changes, and tryes a second. There is nothing so full of changes, as war, not only in regard of the uncertainty of events, but variety of means, new forces being raised, and new stratagems used, from day to day. *Hast thou but one blessing?* said *Esau* to his father *Isaac*; the hand of man may be straitned to one blessing, or one blow, but the hand of God is never straitned. As he hath store of blessings, so of blows, and can give both out, both in degree and kind diversified; if one army of evils doth not humble and conquer us to his obedience, he can quickly levy a new one. All creatures will come in to his help, if he do but set up his standard, or give command to beat his drum. He changed his armies ten times against *Pharaoh*; *Pharaoh* had indeed changes and war upon him, yet no change wrought in him: therefore the war was changed, till he was destroyed. This war with *Job* was not a destroying one, but it was a terrible one, so terrible that he cryes out in the language of his former complaints, *Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

Job

JOB, Chap. 10. Verſe 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

Wherefore then haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb? O that I had given up the ghoſt, and no eye had ſeen me!
I ſhould have been as though I had not been, I ſhould have been carried from the womb to the grave.
Are not my dayes few? Ceaſe then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.
Before I go whence I ſhall not return, even to the land of darkneſs and the ſhadow of death;
A land of darkneſs, as darkneſs it ſelf, and of the ſhadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkneſs.

THeſe five verſes are the concluſion of *Job's* reply to *Bildad*; there are four things remarkable in them.

Firſt, He complaineth that ever he lived a day or an hour in the world, at the beginning of the 18*th* verſe, *Wherefore then haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

Secondly, He wiſheth that he had dyed ſpeedily: ſeeing he could not have that (ſuppoſed) happineſs not to be born into the world; his next requeſt is, that he might not have ſtayed long in the world; he would not have appeared as a man, no nor as a childe, but that birth and burial might have been contiguous, not knowing the diſtance of a day, *verſe* 18, 19. *O that I had given up the ghoſt, and no eye had ſeen me! I ſhould have been as though I had not been, I ſhould have been carried from the womb to the grave.*

Thirdly, He ſheweth, that however he had been diſappointed of both thoſe votes, yet he could not live long; as if he had ſaid, Though I have found much trouble in the world, yet I ſhall not much trouble the world, the time of my departure is at hand, I have lived moſt of my dayes already, and all my dayes are not many, *verſe* 20. *Are not my dayes few?*

Fourthly, He entreateth and ſueth that the few dayes of thoſe few dayes which he had to live, might be good dayes, *Are not my dayes few? Ceaſe then, and let me alone, that I may take*

comfort a little, before I goe whence I shall not return, &c.

The 18*th* and 19*th* verses carry a sense very like to that which hath been opened at the third Chapter of this book, where *Job* complained of his birth, and was troubled that he had the favour of a being, (because he found such an ill-being) in the world. His passion runneth out here *into* a vehement expostulation, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?* As there, *Why dyed I not from the womb?* verse 11.

Sui oblivisc itur ut supra vi doloris. Merc.

Job puts the Question, and demandeth an account of God, Why he came out of the womb? There are three sorts of questions.

First, Such as arise from a desire of necessary information; 'Tis good to ask that we may learn.

Secondly, Such as arise from a needlesse curiosity. 'Tis not good to ask what no duty enjoyns us to learn.

Thirdly Such as arise from pure passion, or rather, from mudded perturbation, not so much desiring information from others, as to vent our selves. 'Tis very ill to ask when we care not to learn. Such is the question here put (say some) a passionate question, arising from the fume and vapours of a distempered minde, desiring to ask, rather then to be answered, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?* As if he had said, *Was I born only to be an object of evil? came I into the world to be made a sad spectacle to the world, to Angels and to men? have my dayes been lengthened out on purpose, that my troubles might be lengthened?* Such a troubled sense there is in these words. The complaints of Saints may sometimes look like the blasphemies of wicked men.

Job complaineth of his birth, and seems forgetfull of all former benefits.

Hence observe,

Dum ita agis mecum, fit ex beneficio tuo non beneficium. Coc.

When we want the mercies we would, we grow angry with the mercies which we have had.

David speaks it to the praise of God, *Thou art he that tookest me out of my mothers womb* (Psal. 22.) *Job* speaks it as a damage to himself, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

Secondly, observe,

We are ready to think we live to no end, if we have not our own ends.

That's the voice of nature, and so far as nature prevails in us, it speaks in us.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *Man is apt to say, there is no reason for that, of which he seeth not the reason.*

When we are at our wits end, and at our reasons, we think there is an end of all wisdome and reason, as if neither God nor man could give an account beyond ours, or answer when we are non-plust.

Yet we may conceive *Job* had a further sense, which yields a more mollifying meaning of these words, for though he (as all the Saints in the old Testament) was much in the dark about the benefit of sufferings, which the Gospel hath now more clearly revealed to us, and called us unto, yet he might have some other intendment in these expostulations: we may charitably suppose him troubled that he was in a condition of life, which (as he conceived) hindered the main end of his life, the glorifying of God, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?* as if he had said, *Lord, I am in a state, wherein I know not how to honour thee, and then what is my life worth unto me? Thy justice is greatly obscured towards me, many are ready to say, for my sake, that surely thou art a hard Master, leaving them to reap evil who have sowed good, and paying thy faithfull and most active servants their wages in sufferings. And as for mercy, I tast little of that; comforts are dainties with me: my cup is bitter, my sorrows are multiplyed: Now when neither justice nor mercy move visibly towards me, how shall I glorifie thee? And wherein can my life be usefull or advantagious to thee? Am I not like a broken vessel, a vessel wherein there is no pleasure? Wherefore then was I brought forth out of the womb?*

Nunc in me justitia obscuratur, & ego non sentio fructum gratiæ tuæ quâ in re ergo gloriæ tuæ inservire potest vita mea? Coc.

This exposition teaches us, That,

A Godly man thinks he liveth to no purpose, if he do not live to the praise and glory of God.

God hath made all things for himself, and it is the design of the Saints to be for him. While that end is attained they can easily part with all their own; and where that is crossed, they cannot be pleased in the attainment of any of their own. The interest of Christ is not only their greatest, but all their interest. Any stop of, much more a disservice to this, causeth an honest heart to cry out with *Job*, and ('tis easie to conceive) it caused *Job* to cry out, *Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

O that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!

O that I had given up the ghost!

אנוש
Facilem & sine dolore mortem innuit.

The Originall signifies usually a gentle and an easie kinde of death; Giving up the ghost, is not a pulling or a violent rending of life away from us, but our laying it down, our surrender or willing resignation of it. Some read this clause, not as we optatively, *O that I had given up the ghost!* but declaratively, *Wherefore hast thou brought me out of the womb? for then I had quickly given up the ghost.* But rather take it as a wish, *O that I had given up the ghost!*

And no eye had seen me!

That is (say some) I would I had dyed before I had been born, for then no eye had seen me. Or, more generally thus: O that I had dyed speedily, so speedily that I might have gone out of the world, before I was observed to have been there: Who delights to see the dead? especially a child dead born, or dying as soon as born? *Sarah* was the delight of *Abrahams* eyes, while she lived, and yet as soon as she was dead, he gives any money for a sepulchre to bury her out of his sight. Or again, *Job* that he might shew how little he regarded life, disregards that which is most desireable in life. Man naturally desires, *To see, and to be seen, to know, and to be known.* That which carries a great part of the world, is an affectation to be pointed at, and taken notice of, as *Some-bodies* in the world. He that liveth unseen in the world, is a man out of the world, or as one buried alive. To be in prison is a great punishment, because a prisoner liveth out of view; he cannot freely see or be seen. *Job* wishes no eye had seen him, rather then his eyes should have seen so much evil, or that others should have seen him in the midst of so many evils.

Innatum est omnibus ut cognosci se velim, & studio teneantur res alias cognoscendi.

Hence note,

First, *That undue and unreasonable questions, are usually followed and fruited with undue and unreasonable wishes.*

Having put the question, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?* See what a wish comes upon it, *O that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!* He that takes undue liberty to speak or do, knows not where he shall restrain himself. They who alwayes act as far as they may, shall often act beyond what they ought. And they who act at all beyond what they

are

are directed, are often carried beyond what themselves intended.

Secondly, Observe, *Man had rather not be seen at all, then to be seen miserable.*

To be seen is a great part of the comfort of this life, but who would not gladly exchange it for ease in obscurity? it is an honour to be seen, but who would be seen cloathed with dishonour? When Christ is propheſied of, as the great pattern of patience and self-denyal, it is said, *He hid not his face from shame and spitting*, Isa. 50. 6. To be a spectacle of misery, is to some worse then their being miserable. They would count it a piece of their happiness, to be unhappy in a corner; and their troubles half removed, if they might steal their troubles. As to be in a good estate, and to know that we are so, makes our estate better to us: So to be in an ill estate, and to be known that we are so, makes it to some tempers a great deal worse. As the hypocrite hopes when he sins, that no eye sees him: so many wish when they suffer, *O that no eye had seen me!*

Verse 19. *I should have been, as though I had not been, I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.*

Some read this verse also as a wish, *O that I had been, as though I had never been! O that I had been carried from the womb to the grave.*

He confirms what he had said, by a further declaration of his condition, in case he had not been brought forth out of the womb, or had died before he had been seen in the throng of the world; Why, what then *Job*? Then, I *should have been as though I had not been*, and my afflictions should never have had any being: so speedy a death had quitted me of all the evils of my life. I should not have sipt or tasted, much less have drunk so deep of this cup of sufferings. It is said of Abortives who die in the womb, and of such as die immediately after they are born, *They are, and they are not*; they who live but a moment in nature, shall live for ever. A life here less then a span long, will be eternity long: yet as to the world, such a life is no life, such a being no being. Lawyers say, they who die before, or as soon as they are born, are reckoned as unborn; they make no change in states, they never had a name, or an interest in the world, and so they go for nothing in the world. The Prophet *Obadiah* (verse 16.) threatens

Est et non est Octimestris partus. Hippoc.

Abortivus pro non nato censetur in jure.

threatens *Edom*, *That they ſhall be as though they had not been*; that is, they muſt periſh, and their memorial with them. Some are ſo thruſt out of the world, that they ſhall be as if they had never been; and ſome come into the world ſo, that their being was, as if they had never been.

A ſhort life is by common eſtimation no life.

As in heaven, where we ſhall live for ever, we ſhall be as if we had ever been: So on earth, ſome live ſo little, that they are as if they never were: that which hath an eternal duration, and ſhall never end, is as if it had ever begun; and that which is but of a ſhort duration and ends quickly, is as if it had never begun. The reaſon why the fruit of ſin goes for nothing, is, becauſe the pleaſure of ſin is but for a ſeaſon, and that a very little ſeaſon, *What fruit have ye of thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed?* That is, Ye have no fruit, or your fruit was nothing: we may ſay of all the pleaſures of ſin, their cradle is their grave, or more near *Jobs* language, they are carried from the womb to the grave. So he ſpeaks next of himſelf.

I ſhould have been carried from the womb to the grave

I ſhould have paſſed without noiſe or notice. There would have been little trouble with me in the world, I ſhould have made but one journey, and that a ſhort one. The ſpeech is proverbial: *From the womb to the grave*, is the motto of *Infant-death*. The Septuagint read it as an expoſtulation, *Wherefore was I not carried out from the womb to the grave?* It would have been a happineſs to me, either not to have been at all, or to have had a being but equivalent (in common account) to a not being. And thus it had been with me, if my firſt ſtep out of my mothers womb: had been into the womb of that *grand mother* the earth. *Job* is often upon the ſame point, renewing his deſires after death: he did ſo (as hath been toucht) at the third Chapter, and at the ſixth, and now he is as fierce and freſh upon it as ever.

Proverbiale eſt, ab utero ad ſepulchrum, cum quis ſimulac natus eſt moritur.

A godly man may often diſcover the ſame infirmity.

Whileſt the ſame ſtock of corruption remains in us, it is productive of the ſame corrupt fruit. There is a ſeminall vertue in the earth, look how often it is plowed and ſowed, ſo often it ſends forth a crop; there is a ſeminal vertue in the earthly part of man, which makes him to put forth evil, as often as occaſion plows, and temptation ſoweth his heart.

Verſe 20.

Verſe 20. *Are not my dayes few? Ceaſe then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.*

Are not my dayes few?

There is a difference in reading: Many tranſlatours joyn the verb *Ceaſe*, with this clauſe: ſo that whereas we read, *Are not my dayes few? Ceaſe then, and let me alone*; they read, *Will not my few dayes ceaſe? then let me alone that I may take comfort a little.* M. *Broughton*, and he hath a ſecond varieth yet further, *Will not he leave off a little in my dayes?* Inſtead of applying the word *few* unto dayes, *Are not my dayes few?* they (taking in the verb) joyn it to the act of God, *Will not he leave off a little in my dayes?* That is, Will not God forbear a little to trouble me? Will not he give me a breathing time in my dayes, which are but few? Surely he will, he will not be ſo ſtrict with me, I doubt not of a gracious anſwer to this humble petition.

יחדל *Primo adjungunt colo. Numquid non paucitas dierum meorum finiatur brevi?* Vulg. *Annon pauci dies mei ceſſantes, ſc deficientes?* Targ. *Annon pauliſper diebus meis ceſſabit?* Jun.

But rather follow our ſenſe, and let the firſt clauſe be a queſtion, *Are not my dayes few?* And then the next words are an inference or uſe which he makes from it, *Ceaſe then, and let me alone*, &c.

Are not my dayes few?] The queſtion doth affirm, Yes, my dayes are few. The ſenſe may be made out one of theſe three wayes, and not unprofitably by all three,

Firſt thus, As a juſtification of his former wiſhes and deſires to die: Have I not upon good reaſon wiſhed that I had never lived? Who can be in love with a ſhort life, and a long trouble? *Are not my dayes few?* Or

Secondly, As an anſwer to ſuch as objected againſt him for wiſhing he had not lived: *Do you know* (ſaid they) *What you have ſaid? Is life ſuch a ſmall matter with you? or do you underſtand what you deſire, when you deſire death? is deformed death become a beauty in your eye? What ever you think it, life is a precious jewel?* Yes (ſaith *Job*) *I know very well what life is, and I know if I had dyed before I was born, I had not loſt much life; What's the life of a few dayes? The life of eternity is worth the having and eſteeming; but why ſhould you think I have wiſhed away a matter of moment, when I wiſhed away this life? For are not my dayes few?*

Whence obſerve, *The loſs of a whole life in this world, is no great loſs.*

We cannot loſe a great deal, when all is but a little, nor many, when

when we have but a few in all. He looseth but a few dayes, who dyeth the first day; then, what have we got, when we have lived according to the calculation of nature, many dayes? *Job* makes this an argument to satisfie others about his wish, that all his dayes had been cut off: May not we satisfie our selves by it, when a peice or a part, an end, the worst end of our dayes is cut off? What if we have abated ten or twenty of those years which possibly we might have lived; twenty years are but a few dayes; for a whole life, consisting of three twenties and ten, is but a few dayes. This we are sure of, that the few dayes we loose on earth shall never be missed in heaven; it will be no abatement to our comfort there, to think we lived but a little here; all the sorrows of this life will be swallowed up in the next, and so will our sudden parting with this life.

Thirdly, The cleerest sense of these words [*Are not my dayes few?*] is, that they are the ground of a petition for the mittigation of his troubles; as if he had said, *Lord, I have but a while to live in the world, my dayes are few, therefore do not think much that I should have a little comfort and refreshing in these my dayes; consider my life is short, O that thou wouldest slack thy hand, and yield me some ease and comfort in this short life.* He had used this argument at the seventh Chapter, verse 16. *Let me alone, for my dayes are vanity*; here, *Let me alone, for my dayes are few. The fewness of our dayes is one of the vanities of our dayes.*

Are not my dayes few?

Paucitas dierum, i. e. paucissimi dies abstracta significationem incitant et acuunt.

מעט *Imminutionem decrementumq; significat, q. d. nunquam crescit, sed decrescit, et ad angustias majores indies reducitur, & in perpetua consumptione evanescit.* Bold

מה חדל אני *Quanti ævi ego.* Mont.

The Hebrew is, *Is not fewness of dayes mine?* Yes, That's my portion. Abstracts often encrease, and sometimes they diminish the sense. Here the sense is diminutive; as if he had said, My dayes are so far from many, that they are fewness it self: Mine are not encreasing and growing, but declining and abating dayes. My dayes are going down, they are brought into a lesser, and a narrower compass every day. The Chaldee renders, *Are not my dayes ceasing?* My dayes fade and wear out every day, *Shew me how short my life is* (closer to the original) how soon ceasing I am, or as others, What, or of what quantity mine age is, how transitory, how temporary I am.

Cease then, and let me alone.

Some read it in the third person, *Therefore let him cease from me,*

me, and let me alone; we in the second, *Cease then, and let me alone. Job* looks upon himself as one besieged and straitned with afflictions: Now (saith he) I beseech thee raise thy siege, and draw off thy force from me: Or if thou wilt not make a finall peace with me, yet grant me a cessation, let me have a truce for a limited time, let me not have such continual alarms, or be forced to stand armed continually; let me rest, saith the Septuagint; *Issachar* stooped to burdens, because he desired rest. Some are so burdened that they cannot rest, how much soever they desire it. *Job* desires God to give him rest, because his dayes were few.

שׁית ממני *Deponat à me, sc. flagellum aut supplicium. Deponat exercitus suos procul à me.* Jun.

Hence observe,

First, *It is an argument moving the Lord to forbear sending us many troubles, because we have but few dayes.*

Thus *David* prayes (*Psal.* 89. 47.) *Remember how short my time is, wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?* Lord, I have but a few dayes, and shall my dayes be nothing but clouds and darkness? The same argument is used, *Psal.* 39. ult. *O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.* I shall soon be gone, let me have some ease, while I stay here. Observe,

Secondly, *That except the Lord withdraw his hand, nothing in the world can give us ease.*

Cease then, and let me alone that I may take comfort; as if he had said, If thine hand be upon me, in vain do friends comfort me; creatures offer me their help in vain, *Cease then and let me alone.*

From the matter of his argument, Observe,

The life of man is short.

It is a common *theame*, and every man thinks he can declaim upon it, and speak to it; but there are few that can live to, or act by it. A multitude of instructions arise to us from the fewness of our dayes: And did men know indeed that their dayes are few, their evil deeds would not be so many, and their good would be more.

Again, That mans dayes are so few, yields us not only many instructions, but many wonders. Is it not strange that we who have but a few dayes in our lives, should have so many afflictions in our lives? that we should have few dayes and many sorrows? Is it not strange that we should have few dayes in our lives, and

many cares about our lives? many cares and few dayes, yea many cares upon one day! *Thou art carefull about many things*, saith Christ to *Martha*: Is it not strange that we should have so few dayes, and so many sins? Few dayes and innumerable sins, so many sins as no man can number them, and so few dayes that a child may number them? And is not this a wonder above all the rest, that we should have but a few dayes, and yet be gravell'd and puzl'd so as we are in numbring them? A little humane learning will serve to number our dayes, but we need a great deal of spiritual learning to number them. A little study in the Mathematicks will do it, but we need more then study, experience in Divinity before we can do it, and yet neither study nor experience can do it, unless God himself be our Tutor, *He only can teach us so to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdome.* We shall commence fools at last, if we have not one wiser then the wisest upon earth, to teach us this truth.

That I may take comfort a little.

The word which we translate to take comfort, signifies such comfort as they find, who being heated extreamly, and extream thirsty, come to drink at a fountain of sweet waters. The Vulgar readeth it, *Let me alone, that I may mourn a little*; yet taking in the former sense, He seems thus to explain himself: If the Lord would let me alone, I would go and ease my self with complaining, the waters of my head, the fountain of mine eyes would be a refreshing to my wearied soul. *Sorrows are sometimes joyous, and moderate mourning gives the mind a reviving.*

כית
Roboravit, confortavit, respiravit, vires collegit.

But rather, Take it in the generall, *Let me alone that I may comfort my self*, and that these sorrows may abate; I desire to rally, and recollect my scattered thoughts a while, and so take in somewhat of the sweetness of this life before I dye. *Cease from me for some refreshing*, saith M. *Broughton. I do not expect much, Lord, let me have some before I go whence I shall not return.*

Si dolorem emovire non vult, respirandi locum aliquem et spacium concedat. Merc.

Here observe one common principle of nature,

Man desireth his own good. A well-being, as well as a being. What is there in life for nature to prize, if there be nothing but sorrow in it?

Secondly, Observe, *That great sufferings make us very modest in our demands.*

Job

Job was in great affliction, and now a little comfort would go a great way with him. When the people of *Iſrael* were in bondage under *Pharaoh* and his task-maſters, and had heavier burdens laid upon them, they do not ſo much as move for a totall releaſe from their task, but modeſtly complain, *There is no ſtraw given unto thy ſervants, and they ſay to us, Make brick*; as if they had ſaid, let us have ſtraw, and we are willing to make brick. A poor man cryes out for a half-peny, for a farthing, not for hundreds or thouſands. He that is ready to ſtarve will not ask good chear, or a plentifull feaſt, but let me have a cruſt of bread, or a little water. When *Dives* was in hell, what did he deſire of *Abraham*? Did he beg to come into his boſome? Doth he ſay, *Lazarus* is in a good place, let me come too: No, he deſired but a drop of water; and what was a drop of water to flames of fire? O how would it delight the damned in hell to think of a ceſſation, but for one hour from their pain! What a joy would it be unto them, if it ſhould be told them that a thouſand, or ten thouſand years hence, they ſhould have one good day, or that they might be let alone to take comfort a little! *They who are low, make low demands.* Think of this ye that enjoy much comfort, and ſwim in rivers of pleaſure Let not the great conſolations of God be ſmall to you, when you hear *Job* thus inſtant and importunate for the ſmalleſt. *Let me alone that I may take comfort a little.*

But why is he in ſuch haſte for a little comfort? one ground is in the former words, *My dayes are few?* and he backs it with a ſecond in the next. If it come not quickly, it will come too late. I am ready to take my laſt journey, *therefore let me take a little comfort.*

Periphraſis moriendi, qui mori-tur dicitur abire, unde abitionem pro morte veteres uſurparunt. Druſ.

Verſe 21. *Before I go whence I ſhall not return, even to the land of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death.*

Before I go.

That is, before I die. Death is a going out of the world; Chriſt intimates his death under this notion (*John* 16.7.) *If I go the Comforter will come. And, I go from you*, &c. Dying is a journeying from one region to another. *Death is a changing of our place, though not of our company. Before I go*; whither?

Whence I shall not return.

That's a journey indeed. That which pleaseth us in our longest journeys while we live, is a hope of returning to our own homes again. But when we dye we take a journey from whence there is no returning. Not return? Shall not a man return when he dieth? is death an everlasting departure, an eternall night? No, Man shall return, but he shall not return to such a life or state as he had before. He is gone for ever out of this world, and out of all worldly interests. *Job* beleived a resurrection, or a returning from the grave by the power of God, and he knew there was no returning by the power of nature, or by the help of any creature: In that reference, *we go, whence we shall not return.* So *David* speaks of his dead Infant, *I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me*, 2 Sam. 12. 25. When once we are shut up in those chambers of death, and made prisoners in the grave, though all the Princes in the world send warrants for our release, we cannot get released. The pertinacy and stiffness of the grave is such as yields to none. We are fast shut up when we are shut up there. Love and the grave will hardly part with that, which they have closed with, and are possessed of. The grave is one of those three things which are never satisfied, or say it is enough, *Prov.* 30. 15. And as it is unsatiable in receiving, so it is as close in keeping, it will part with nothing. A grave is the Parable of a coveous man; he is greedy to get, and watchfull to hold: when his money goes into his purse, he saith it shall not return: the grave hath a strong appetite to take down, and as strong a stomack to digest. Till God (as I may so speak) by his mighty power gives the grave a vomit, and makes the earth stomack-sick with eating mans flesh, it will not return one morsel. At the resurrection this great eater shall cast up all again. And as they who take strong vomits, are put into a kind of trembling convulsion, all the powers of the body being shaken; such will the prognosticks be of the resurrection. There was an earthquake when Christ arose, God made the earth shake, and commanded it to give back the prisoner, because *it was not possible that he should be holden of it.* And when God speaks the word, it will not be possible for the grave to hold us prisoners: till then it will. It was usual among the Ancients, to say of a dead friend, *He is gone, and he will come again*, intimating a resurrection. Heathens not knowing

Fidem resurrectionis non lædit. Pin.

Indicat nullam esse vim in natura cui pareat mors, et cui receptacula animarum obediant, reddereq; cogantur, quem semel receperunt. Pin.

Veteres Romani dicere solebant, abiit & reversurus est, resurrectionem carnis haud obscurè innuentes. Ter. *Salve æternum mihi maxime Palla Eternumq; vale.* Virg. Eneid.

knowing nor beleiving it, call death, *An eternall leave-taking or farewell never to meet again.*

Valeant qui inter nos dissidium volunt. Terent.

Observe from this description of the grave,

That the statutes of death are unrepealable.

Death is an everlasting banishment from the world, *I shall go whence I shall not return.* This may lye very sad upon their spirits, who have not a better place then the world to go to, when they go from the world. To go whence we shall never return, and yet where we cannot endure to be a moment, is deepest misery: Such a man cannot chuse but set out with a sad heart. And that's the reason why wicked men, whose consciences are awakened, go so unwillingly to this sleep, they know whether they are going, only they know they cannot return. *Make ye friends* ('tis Christs counsel) *of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations* (Luk. 10 9.) *Mammon of unrighteousness*, that is, say most Interpreters, Mammon gotten unrighteously; but surely Christ would not teach us to make men our friends, by that which makes God our enemy. They translate better who render it, *Make ye friend of the false or unfaithfull Mammon*, That is, of that Mammon which will deceive and leave you shortly, therefore make you friends, while you have it; that when ye fail, that is when you dye or go out of the world, they may receive you, that is, ye may be received into everlasting habitations; leave not this habitation till ye have got interest in a better. The Saints arm themselves against death by this argument, *We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hand, eternal in the heavens* (2 Cor. 5. 1.) We know there is no return to buildings made with hands, we must leave our houses for ever, our lands for ever, and our relations for ever, but we are assured of a building *of God, an house not made with hand, eternall in the heavens.* This supported, their hearts, when their earthly houses were falling.

Animula vagula, blandula, &c. quæ nunc abibis in loca? Adr.

Quod est falsum & fluxum ob Hellenistis usu Hebræorum dicitur. Hens. exercit. Sacr.

Job having thus described death it self, proceeds to describe the grave, which is the place of death, or the *Black-hall of the King of terrours.* Would you know what this place is, from whence there is no returning? it is, saith he (in the close of this verse) *even the land of darkness, and the shadow of death.* And in the last verse.

Verse

Verſe 22. *A land of darkneſs, as darkneſs it ſelf, and of the ſhadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkneſs.*

This is the place where death dwels, or the ſeat of death, and here's a deſcription of it, which exceeds the Phanſie of Poets, and the rhetorick of all Heathen Oratours. The Spirit of God riſeth to the height of eloquence in diſcovering that unpleaſant region.

This ſubterranean Geography, gives a double character of it. 1. *A land of darkneſs.* 2. *A land of the ſhadow of death*; both which are aggravated by their additions. It is a land of darkneſs, but not of an ordinary darkneſs, *It is a land of darkneſs, as darkneſs it ſelf.* It is a land of the ſhadow of death, not of an ordinary ſhadow of death, but of the ſhadow of death, 1. *Without any order.* 2. *Where the light is as darkneſs.*

A land of darkneſs.

That is, abounding with darkneſs, a land where darkneſs is the ſtaple, and the only commodity to be had. Darkneſs is the hangings and ornament of the houſe of death. The grave is elſewhere called, *A land of forgetfulneſs* (Pſal. 88. 12.) becauſe there all things are forgotten. We read (*Jer.* 12. 5.) of a *land of peace*, that is, a land where peace abounds, a land in every corner whereof peace ſprings and groweth up. *Canaan* (*Deut.* 8 8.) was called, A *good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that ſpring out of the valleys and hills*, A *land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates*; A *land of oyl-olive, and of honey*: That is, a land where theſe good things were natural and plentifull. A land where the neighbour Nations might furniſh themſelves, and fraight their Ships with thoſe commodities. In ſuch a ſenſe *Job* calls the grave, a land of darkneſs; as if he had ſaid, would you know what the merchandize of the grave is? I will tell you, it is darkneſs, there you may have darkneſs as much as you deſire, and beſides that nothing, how much ſoever you deſire it.

Cum ſepulchrum dicitur terra tenebrarum, ibi tanquam in nativo ſolo obſcuritas intelligitur provenire.

This ſhews the terrour of death to a meer natural underſtanding. Many are afraid to be at all in the dark, how much more to be alwayes in darkneſs: As light is put for joy, ſo darkneſs for ſorrow. Darkneſs, whether ſpiritual or natural, is afflictive.

Dark

Dark houses are unpleasant, what then is a land of darkness? The face of a man is darkned with sorrow, and joy is the light of it. It hath been observed that some *great Princes* have had light beaming out from their eyes. *Augustus* had so sparkling an eye, that few could look upon him: his eyes cast forth rayes like the Sun, dazling the beholders. Good, gracious Princes cast ont beams of favour upon their people, which refresh them as the light. Death and the grave have no light in their faces. Death looks black and grim, hell is extreamest darkness, and the pains of hell are chains of darkness.

Suetonius in Augusto, c. 79.

And of the shadow of death.

There is more then the shadow of death in the grave, death it self dwells there. The words sound an abatement of the sense, but indeed they heighten it. *The shadow of death* is thick darkness, thickest darkness, the very strength of darkness. This shadow is the substance of death, or death with addition of greatest deadliness

Terra cujus palpebræ sunt, sicut caligo umbrarum mortis. Targ.

Job having given the land this dreadfull name, *A land of darkness, and of the shadow of death*, makes it yet more dreadfull by this further explication.

A land of darkness. as darkness it self] Or, A *land of darkness, which looks like darkness.* The word signifies wearinesse, restlessness, and vexation of spirit. To be in a dark condition, is to be in a wearisome condition. The Vulgar reads it, *A land of misery.* Some darkness hath a degree of light mingled with it, but this is pure or unmixed darkness, darkness in its proper hue, darkness it self. When a man of skill acts skilfully, we say he acts like himself; and when a wicked man doth very wickedly, we say, he doth like himself. The darkness of the grave looks like nothing but it self.

Every evil, the more like it is to it self, the worse it is. When the Apostle would shew sin in its colours, he calleth it *sinfull-sin* (Rom. 7.13.) *Sin by the commandement became exceeding sinfull*, the commandement caused it to look like it self. Sorrowfull sorrow, and painfull pain are the worst of pains and sorrows. There is sorrow which may consist with some joy and pain, which may cohabit with some ease: but he that hath sorrow like sorrow it self, and pain like pain it self, hath the extremity of both. Thus also every good, the more like it is to it self, the better it is; holiness like it self, is the purest holiness; grace like it self, is the sweetest grace. When a holy man works like himself, his work is best.

God

God is ever like himself in all he doth, and every thing we do is then best, when it is done most like to what God doth.

And of the shadow of death, without any order; or, *The shadow of death, and not orders.*

ולא פרדים
Et non ordines.

The word which we translate order, is frequent in the Rabbins: The holy Text hath it only in this place, and here in the plurall number, A *land of darkness, and the shadow of death, and without any orders*, a land unordered. There's no government, no method in the grave. And if it hath no order, then it hath nothing in it but confusion, nothing but disorder. That the grave, or the state of death, is without any order, may be understood two wayes,

Hebrei ad vices dici de nobis, æstatis et hiemis &c. referunt. Expertem vicissitudinem. Jun.

First, Without order, because it hath no changes or vicissitudes in it, there is no difference in the grave between night and day, winter and summer, hot and cold, wet and dry, between the rising and setting of the Sun: This is the order which God hath set in nature; and when the flood had put all things into a kinde of confusion, God promised, *That seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night should not cease*, that is, there should be an everlasting order continued in the creature. The dead know none of those changes and vicissitudes; as much of the vanity, so some of the comforts of this life consist in changes; but all is alike in death.

Secondly, There is no order in going to the grave; men do not keep to a rule in dying, nor observe their ranks. The old go not alwayes first, and then the young; the great before, and the mean following after. Death hath no master of the Ceremonies; but takes promiscuously, here a childe, and there a man, here a rich man, and there a beggar. And as there is no order in going thither, so none when we are there; the grave mingleth the dust, and bones of one with another. We cannot distinguish the rich mans dust from the dust of the poor, nor the bones of Kings from those of the lowest subject. Though rich men are buried in more eminent places, and Kings under stately Monuments, though their Tombs differ from their inferiours, yet their bones do not. An old Philosopher was observed searching a cæmitery, and prying busily among the Tombs, and being asked, what he looked for, answered, I come to see if I can finde the dust of rich men, and the bones of Princes, but I cannot see which is which; the dust of the rich and of the poor, of Princes and peasants, are all alike to my eye.

And

And seeing *Job* makes an aggravation of the misery of death, that it is without order; we may observe,

That order hath an excellency, and a beauty in it.

The less order there is in any place or state, the worse it is, and where is no order, there it is worst of all. Civil order is the beauty of Common-wealths, and spiritual order is the beauty of the Church. The Apostle rejoyced to behold the order of the *Colossians*, as well as their faith (*Col.* 2. 5.) His charge to the *Corinthians* is, *Let all things be done decently and in order* (1 *Cor.* 14. 40.) He had warned them (*ver.* 33.) to take of disorder, because *God is not the God of confusion, but of peace*; where order is not kept, the peace cannot be kept. Death is evil, and that's without order; hell is worst of all, and there is no order at all. It is a kinde of death to see any disorder, and a very hell to see all in disorder.

And where the light is as darkness.

Some read by the verb, *Where it shineth like darkness*, or thus, *where it lighteth like darkness*. The Vulgar paraphrases rather then translates, *Where there is everlasting horrour*. *Job* said before, it was a land of darkness, and of darkness like *darkness it self*: yet now he seemeth to affirm, that there is light in the grave, and if there be, how is that darkness like darkness it self? his meaning is, that which looks most like to light in the grave, is darkness, and it is therefore darkness, like darkness it self, because if you can imagin any thing to have a shew of light in the grave, that very light is as darkness. When the Apostle would invincibly argue the infinite wisdom and strength of God, he saith, *The foolishness of God is wiser then men, and the weakness of God is stronger then men* (1 Cor. 1. 25.) God is only wise, only strong, how then speaks this Apostle of the foolishness or weakness of God? His meaning is, look what act soever of God appears to man, as having foolishness or weakness in it, even that foolishness is wiser, and that weakness stronger then men. In what sense *Paul* saith, *The foolishness of God is wisdom, the weakness of God is strength*, or (which is all one) the darkness of God is light: in the same *Job* saith, the light of the grave is darkness. For as God is wisdom, and in him there is no foolishness at all, strength, and in him there is no weakness at all, light, and in him there is no darkness at all: so *Job* supposeth of the grave, that in it there is darkness, and no light at all, while he affirms the light found there is darkness. Christ speaks near this

חדש
à radice
ידש
Floruit, splenduit, fulgorem et magnificentiam exercuit. Tenebrescet, sicut caligo. Mon. *Quod in eo splendidissimum est, caligini simile est.*

language of *Job* (*Mat.* 6. 23.) *If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness*, he had said before, *The light of the body is the eye, and if the eye be single, the whole body is light*, that is, if a man have right aims and pure ends, these will keep him right in all his course, but if his eye be dark, his ends base, how base will his actions be, how great his darkness? we may argue thus to the point in hand, if the light of the grave be darkness, how great is that darkness? The Prophet *Amos* sets forth great changes in States and Kingdoms by prodigious changes in the air, *Lo, he makes the morning darkness*, Ch. 4. 15. Again, *He turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night*, Chap. 5. 8.

When either civil or morall good is turned into evil, we are past all hope of good; if once our light be dark, we must expect nothing but darkness. The best works of hypocrites will be found wickedness, how wicked then will they be in their worst? if their holiness be unclean, how unclean is their unholiness? all their morall light is as darkness, and all their civil light shall be turned into darkness.

Some (especially Popish) Interpreters understand this description, not of the grave, but of hell. The same word in the Hebrew serves both hell and the grave. Death looks like hell, and bears much of its image. What is there in hell, but the agonies and sweat of death, the pangs and paleness of death? the chains and bonds of death? the state of the damned in hell, is an eternal act of dying. And all that *Job* speaks of the grave, is fulfilled there to the utmost. There is darkness, like darkness it self, called therefore *utter darkness*; there is the shadow of death without any order, there the light is as darkness. But though the text be true of Hell, yet *Job* had nothing to do or suffer beyoud the grave, and I shall carry his discourse no further, keeping within those confines: We may learn,

That death in it self is no way desireable.

Nostri theologizantes ad infernum respexerunt, sed Job ad sepulchrum respexit, Merc.

Is there any beauty in darkness, in thick darkness, where there is no order, in darkness, where the very light is darkness? One of the greatest plagues upon *Egypt*, was three dayes darkness; what then is there in death (naturally considered) but a plague, seeing it is perpetual darkness?

If death be such in it self, and such to those who die in sin, how should our hearts be raised up in thankfulness to Christ, who hath put other terms upon death and the grave by dying for our sins! Christ hath made the grave look like a heaven to his. Christ hath abolish-

abolliſheddeath, not death it ſelf (for even beleivers die) but all the trouble and terrour of death, the darkneſs and the diſorder of it, are taken away. Chriſt hath mortified death, kill'd death, ſo that now death is not ſo much an opening of the door of the grave, as it is an opening of the door of heaven. Chriſt who is the Sun of righteouſneſs, lay in the grave, and hath left perpetual beams of light there for his purchaſed people. The way to the grave is very dark, but Chriſt hath ſet up light for us, or cauſed light to ſhine into the way. Chriſt hath put death into a method, yea Chriſt hath put death into a kind of life, or he hath put life into the death of beleivers. All the gaſtlineſs, horrour, yea the darkneſs and death of death is removed. The Saints may look upon the grave as a land of light, like light it ſelf; yea as a land of life, like life it ſelf, where there is nothing but order, and where the darkneſs is as light.

Job's reply to *Bildad* and complaints to God have carryed his diſcourſe as far as death and the grave, he gives over in a dark diſordered place, God ſtill leaving him under much darkneſs, and many diſorders of ſpirit. As his great afflictions are yet continued, ſo his weakneſſes continue too. His graces break forth many times, and ſometimes his corruption: both are coming to a further diſcovery, while his third friend *Zophar* taks up the bucklers, and renews the battel: upon what terms he engages with *Job*, how *Job* acquits himſelf, and comes off from that engagement, is the ſum of the four ſucceeding Chapters.

FINIS.